

**A
MARVEL
MONTHLY**

Vol.1 No.10 50p

STARBURST

SCIENCE FANTASY IN TELEVISION, CINEMA AND COMICS

DOCTOR WHO

Tom Baker Speaks

STAR TREK

The Motion Picture

LOST IN SPACE

**FULL COLOUR
POSTER GALLERY**

**ALIENS
in the cinema**

**The Shape of
Things to Come**



Remake review





They Came from Outer Space ~ see page 10

STARBURST

SCIENCE FANTASY IN TELEVISION, CINEMA AND COMICS

Volume 1 Number 10

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One of the most risky things in publishing is to announce what features you have lined up for the following issue.

Last month I risked it, and among the lineup for **Starburst 10** I promised a feature on the latest smash humour tv show, **Mork & Mindy**.

Between **Starburst 9** and **10**, we've produced our summer range of Marvel Specials. Among them **TV Heroes**. The publicity for **TV Heroes** promised the inclusion of a feature on tv's **Dr Who**, **Tom Baker**.

So we'd suddenly got a general tv magazine containing a feature about a science fiction show, and a science fiction magazine containing a feature about a tv humour show.

You've guessed it. Sudden (late) inspiration brought about a switch-over. Hence this issue contains our **Tom Baker** piece rather than the tenuously s-related **Mork & Mindy**.

Now having no doubt perked your curiosity about our new magazine, here's the rundown...

Genres of television come and go. From westerns, through kung fu, cops and now science fiction. But the hero figure remains one of the few constants.

We've been so overwhelmed by your consistently enthusiastic response to **Starburst** over the twenty months since our first issue, we felt it time to produce a spin-off. So, our second cousin, **TV Heroes** was born.

Priced 40p and available by the time you read this, **TV Heroes'** 52 pages include features on **Wonder Woman**, **Dick Turpin**, **Mork & Mindy**, **Bionic Woman**, **TV Tees**, **The Prisoner**, **The Starsky & Hutch Syndrome**, **TV Talk** (news and views), plus the most incredible tv hero crossword you can imagine!

Totally compiled by the **Starburst** staff and contributors, it promises to be a winner.

Watch for it!

Best wishes,

Daz Skinn

Editor.

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The fourth tv incarnation of the wandering Time Lord, Tom Baker, talks about his earlier career and the events leading up to his being chosen to follow William Hartnell, Patrick Troughton and Jon Pertwee.

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Since **The Thing (from Another World)** poor old Earth has been a temporary pull-in for almost every galactic traveller, both malevolent and benevolent, to pass within a meteor's throw. In place of our **Starburst 4 Classics** series this month we take a look at some of the cinema's versions of our first alien visitors.

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No relation to our news column and precious little to do with the classic 1936 film, **Starburst** presents a critical appraisal of Canada's unofficial sequel to the earlier H. G. Wells movie which stars Jack Palance and Barry (Space 1999) Morse.

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WHO'S WHO

A profile of Tom Baker





Top: Tom Baker as the villainous Prince Koura with the beautiful Caroline Munro (as the slave-girl Marigiana) in *The Golden Voyage of Sinbad* (1973). Above: Koura listens to a report from his magically created Homunculus.

The *Times* once wrote of Tom Baker that he was "a very tall man with a beautiful voice and a range of expression from the nobly heroic to a fleeting resemblance to Harpo Marx". And that's all most people know about one of British television's most successful and popular actors. A superficial image of a tall, loquacious man with a long scarf. But what is he really like? How did he become one of the screen's most instantly recognisable faces?

One of the strange things is that he came to the *Dr Who* series because of his success in villainous roles. And he was lucky enough to come to the series at a turning point in the programme. Simultaneously, the series lost the three men who held it together. Producer Barry Letts, script editor Terrance Dicks and star Jon Pertwee had worked together on the *Dr Who* series for five years. They had all joined at roughly the same time; and now they all decided to move on to other areas at the same time, leaving an enormous gap in the programme. Philip Hinchcliffe was brought in to replace Barry Letts as producer. Scriptwriter Bob Holmes, who had been a regular contributor to *Dr Who*, replaced Dicks as the script editor. But that still left one vital gap unfilled. Who was to be the new *Who*?

It was Bill Slater, BBC TV's Head of Drama Serials, who first suggested Tom Baker. He had just seen him as the villainous magician Prince Koura in *The Golden Voyage of Sinbad*. And he had also seen Baker's performance as Rasputin, the mad monk, in *Nicholas and Alexandra*. So Baker was shortlisted for the lead role in *Dr Who*. But his own background was even more bizarre than the Doctor's.

Tom Baker was brought up in the Scotland Road area of Liverpool, one of the toughest parts of one of Britain's toughest cities. It was an Irish area with a very strong religious tradition. His mother was a devout Catholic and it was mainly she who brought him up because his father was so often away at sea. Religion dominated his early life. Baker says that, from the age of five, he was constantly at confession until eventually he dried up of things to confess: "I was brought up among Irish pubs and Irish priests and brainwashed with this pre-occupation with death. Which is perhaps why I still wander round graveyards collecting strange epitaphs".

Talking about himself as a child, Baker describes "a young man desperate to make his mark, fantasising and dreaming. Not clever at school. Rather overgrown and therefore odd to look at. *Good heavens! Is he only eleven? But he's six foot one!* people said". He acted in school productions and, when he was aged 15, he was offered a job at the famous Abbey Theatre in Dublin. His highly religious and protective mother refused to let him go.

But, soon afterwards, a school lecturer



Above: Tom Baker, as Rasputin, in *Nicholas and Alexandra* (1971). Right: Baker sits in the makeup chair for the same film. Opposite: Baker as Prince Koura in *The Golden Voyage of Sinbad* (1973).



extolled the virtues of the monastic life. He said it was not easy. You had to adhere to vows of chastity, poverty and obedience. That didn't seem too bad to the young Tom Baker. The chastity was no problem at his age. He had known poverty ever since he was born. And as for obedience—well, everybody seemed to kick him around anyway. So, aged 15, he entered a monastery in Jersey where he dug the gardens and stoked the boiler and did other menial chores and, of course, got up at 5.15 am to say *Veni Spiritus Sancti* with the brothers. Later, he moved to Shropshire as a novice.

In all, he led the monastic life for six long years and he is still reluctant to talk about his life 'inside' except to say: "Until I was 22, I was totally preoccupied with religion" and "I must admit that I only did it to get away from my background". Whether or not it helped him to play the Pope in *Luther* or Rasputin the mad monk in *Nicholas and Alexandra* is anybody's guess.

At any rate, after six years in the enclosed, inward-looking monastic world, he left for a taste of freedom. Six weeks after leaving, he was called up for compulsory National Service in the Army. As usual, he had a unique method of dealing

with the circumstances in which he found himself. "I simply", he says, "feigned idiocy right through my National Service and got away with murder. In my second year, I was able to turn up on muster parade in red leather slippers. Harmless dementia is considered something sacred as long as there's no violence in the unhingement. I went around saying preposterous things. I'd say *I won't be shouted at by a bunch of professional murderers* and, of course, they'd shout at me, so I'd proceed to cry. And that simply unhinged

them. Finally, they just left me alone because I was too much trouble."

It was also one of the turning points in his life. He explains: "I was a terribly withdrawn, pained, skinny man and the Army released me. I loathed Queen's Regulations. It was the enforced contact with people of disparate backgrounds that did it. I was coerced into a Unit show. When I discovered I could make people laugh, it gave me a new strength."

He left the Army after serving his two years and, eventually, was accepted by a





Above: Tom Baker, as Rasputin, in *Nicholas and Alexandra* (1971).

drama school. But he had to wait seven months before the course started, so he joined the Merchant Navy as a seaman on the *Queen Mary*, then came back for the drama course which lasted two years. He found work in repertory theatres around Britain and it was during this time that he discovered a dog's life has its advantages.

While he was working at York Repertory Theatre, playing the part of a dog in a late-night revue, he was 'spotted' by a National Theatre talent scout. He is probably the only spotted dog ever to be interviewed by Laurence Olivier and given an acting job at the National.

It was his big break, right? Name in lights? Choice of all the big parts? Wrong.

The first part he played at the National Theatre was a horse in *The Trials of Sancho Panza*. He later graduated to playing humans and stayed at the National Theatre for 2½ years. He also worked in movies. It was Laurence Olivier who suggested Baker for the role of Rasputin in *Nicholas and Alexandra* (1971). He also appeared in Pasolini's *Canterbury Tales* (1972), *Vault of Horror* (1973), *Luther* (1973), *The Mutations* (1974) and *The Golden Voyage of Sinbad* (1975). He also had to support himself by working in a Meccano factory, a bakery (Baker in a bakery?), by selling ice-cream, hod-carrying and housework.

It wasn't an easy life. Immediately before he was chosen as the lead in *Dr Who*, *Films Illustrated* interviewed him and his view of the future seemed bleak: "I suppose next week I will be working for the Cadogan Employment Agency, which

means I shall be putting emulsion on people's walls or scrubbing the front steps. I shall not despise it, but it distresses me slightly because I feel I'm too old and have been going too long to have to do that. But there's no other way. I can't live on what they pay me to do *Macbeth* at the Shaw Theatre. I'm never asked to do television. I did a couple of days work on Jack Smight's *Dr Frankenstein* (title later changed to *Frankenstein: The True Story*). I was reduced to taking two days work—one scene in a picture."

You might think that, when he was chosen as "the Doctor", no-one could have been more surprised than Tom Baker. But that's not entirely true. When the news was announced, he was working on a building site with mates Chopper, Art, Tod, Shorty and Pud. "Those men", he says, "couldn't believe it—their cement-mixer becoming *Dr Who*!"

Producer Philip Hinchcliffe said at the time that his basic idea was "to get back some of the eccentricity of the earlier character" (presumably referring to the flute-playing Patrick Troughton). An important part of the new Doctor's character was the costume (vaguely reminiscent of Baker's appearance as a deformed murderer in *The Mutations*). The over-all design, including the floppy hat and 16-17 foot long scarf, evolved over two days of dressing up.

The initial omens for Baker were bad. On location filming on Dartmoor for his first *Dr Who* programme, he fell and broke his collarbone. But the new Doctor was soon a hugely popular success.

How did Tom Baker like his new life?

Very much. Especially his contact with younger fans: "I'm not interested in the jaded reactions of parents to *Dr Who*. I've never heard a really revelatory remark from adults. But little children—their imaginative reactions mesmerise me." He felt so involved with his audience that he stopped smoking in the street, because he felt responsible for the youngsters who watch the show. (The BBC says the audience is about 60% adults and 40% children.)

He is, in fact, a father with children of his own. He was once married to Anna, the daughter of famous rose-grower Alfred (brother of Harry) Wheatcroft. They had two sons. He says, "The marriage was a rather sad failure and I don't like to recall it. I think of myself now as a bachelor." The *Sun* once quoted him as telling their reporter: "I have this recurring nightmare that I am outside a church. Bent double like a hunchback. All I can see is the hem of a wedding dress. The photographer keeps muttering *Stand up straight, Mr Baker*. I can't because, if I look up, I'll see the bride. My bride."

Whatever the truth of that (and there's always the suspicion that Tom Baker kids some of his interviewers), he seems to be happy now and it's easy to believe him when he says: "I have enjoyed my life much more since I became the Doctor," even though he adds, "I used to get terribly tired of Tom Baker". As if to explain, he says, "When I was Tom Baker, my life was pretty quiet. But now I've become a doctor—without the hassle of training—I have a much more colourful life. The comeback for me has been so preposterously out of proportion."

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THEY CAME FROM

In the many years of science fiction cinema our planet has been portrayed as an intergalactic lay-by for just about every alien invasion force to pass through our fly-speck of a solar system. *Starburst* takes a fond backward glance at some of the weird and wonderful visitors to this island, Earth.

Feature by Tise Vahimagi

THE Science Fiction Cinema has been active since the end of the last century, creating high and low peaks of productivity and quality during its existence. The Twenties, Thirties and Forties all had imaginative and extremely well-made examples of science fiction movies – but in studying the basic themes and sub-divisions of this *genre* the period between 1950 and 1960 stands out as the most prolific decade. Thus, it offers the best ground for examination and evaluation of the various sub-divisions. The theme, in this case, being contact between Earthmen and Extraterrestrials; and the observation of such events by the cinema.

Along with the progression of science and the "Atomic Age" of the 1950s came the reality of space-exploration. Now that all eyes (excepting those that were being investigated by the Government as being "subversive" and card-carrying Communists) were turned skyward, the theories of "life out there" started to flow. This, along with the rash of UFO sightings that

were popular at the time, started the machinery of the imagination rolling – the visitation of Earth by beings from outer space seemed more likely than ever. The imagination of the movie-makers was rolling even faster, and pretty soon Hollywood was sending rocketships off into outer space, visiting new worlds and receiving unwanted visitors.

The Senator McCarthy/un-American activities faction is important at this stage because the sf cinema world of "aliens" was being paralleled to the complex sociopolitical "Reds under the bed" situation; UFO was beginning to mean Unwanted Foreign Object. The meanings read into some of the 1950s Science Fiction films has still to be totally defined, but critics saw communists in a spectrum of films from *Red Planet Mars* (1952) to *Invasion of the Body Snatchers* (1956). Absurd or not, the tendency of the American nation at that time was to grab onto anything, whether it be pro- or anti-Communist.

However, the discussion here takes the form of Extra-terrestrial visitations to Earth and the way they were depicted on film. This area of sf Cinema can be laid down into three basic sections (and even they contain sub-divisions). All are Fifties portraits, drawing on the heroes, beliefs and strategy of that period.

Contact with Alien Life Forms

Contrary to the wishes and hopes of Pulp-fiction addicts, space-monster fans, and blood-and-gore buffs, not all extraterrestrials appeared as screaming hordes of death-dealing Martian mongols. Some of the most subtle and intelligent sf movies were the ones which offered a benevolent alien visitor, and showed him to be totally misunderstood by the human race from the outset.

The classic example of this theme can be seen in Robert Wise's *The Day the Earth Stood Still* (1951), where the alien, Klaatu, calls upon the world's leaders (in his capacity as a sort of inter-planetary



M OUTER SPACE

emissary) to curb their atomic weaponry, or else face destruction at the hands of the other planets. From the beginning, Klaatu is faced with hostility, not from an inherent evil nature but from a fear of the unknown. Klaatu, like all other Extra-terrestrials that were to follow, displayed a position of superiority and intellect, which made his presence even more threatening. Another aspect in *The Day the Earth Stood Still*, one that was to become a standard in sf movies, was the strong military standpoint. All the Army wanted to do was "blast the dirty alien" – eventually getting their wish, nearly causing the destruction of the human race. The tendency towards violence in Earth people virtually reduces us to the level of savages. In this case it is the understanding of the alien that saves us from ourselves. The central feeling displayed in the film is that we are almost prepared to start a War of the Worlds on our own planet.

Other Fifties films that feature a benign alien include *The Cosmic Man* (1958, alien cures crippled boy), *Strange World of Planet X* (1958, aka *Cosmic Monsters*: an alien helps destroy rampaging giant insects), and *Stranger from Venus* (1954, aka *Immediate Disaster*: a Venusian arrives to halt A-bomb tests, and receives similar treatment to that which Klaatu experienced).

It Came from Outer Space, in 1953, featured a benign alien who, this time, was forced to land his craft near a remote desert community in order to effect repairs. Earth was merely a lay-by for him and his presence was purely an accident. The remote desert landscape was a favourite setting for director Jack Arnold, and was used to great effect in this picture. Here, the alien is forced to be somewhat more intrusive than Klaatu by having to "take over" the bodies of a few local residents in order to make his repairs. The film is basically split into two areas, the first half involving a loss-of-identity/alien interference theme which is later resolved by the discovery that the "invader" is in fact friendly and wishes no more than to continue his journey. The situation forces the film's hero (Richard Carlson) to act against his neighbours when trying to protect the alien from their hostility.

The Space Children (1958), another Jack Arnold entry in the sf stakes, contains a slightly hazy story about a well-meaning alien (a luminous, pulsating blob) who telepathically instructs the off-spring of rocket-testing officials to sabotage the weapons of war. The value here is that although the alien looked like a terrible creature and utilised children in affairs of



Above: An unknown artist's impression of the arrival of the mammoth energy-draining machine in *Kronos* (1957). Opposite: Margaret Field meets the title star of *The Man from Planet X* (1951). Below: Not a robot but actually an alien in armour from *Earth vs the Flying Saucers* (1956).

sabotage, its intentions were finally revealed as being good for mankind. The main message in this was, presumably, that the understanding level of young children is far more productive than that of adults – who, at the closing moments of the film, move in to deal with the alien just before it takes off for outer space.

Joseph Newman's *This Island Earth* (1955; see *Starburst* 8) is a remarkable variation of the non-hostile Extra-terrestrials theme; also, in this film, the aliens are called upon to enlist the aid of Earthmen. Two planets, Metaluna and Zahgon, are at war and a party from Metaluna arrive on Earth to utilise the skills of the world's top scientists. Two of the scientists (Rex Reason and Faith Domergue) are taken back to Metaluna for further work, but when they arrive all hope for the planet is lost. The surviving alien returns them to Earth and then crashes into the ocean. The first half of the picture is pretty much routine, concerning itself with the suspense stemming from the presence of other-worldly people. The second half, however, is much more lively and colourful, taking us on a trip into outer space and (more importantly) revealing the sympathetic side of the doomed aliens. *This Island Earth* serves as something of a morality-play against the futility of war, and the inevitable outcome of total destruction (something of a recurring theme



throughout the 1950s).

The primary ingredients that were revealed in this area consisted of the (human) hero who somehow learns to understand the aliens and attempts to aid them in communication; the forceful military presence, every ready to let loose at the intruder; the strong sense and feeling that the aliens are always more powerful than Earth's forces and, if need be, could cause unlimited havoc.

Discovery and Hostility of Alien Life Forms

This area deals, essentially, with singular threats from outer space which are not necessarily of the Invasion type. There are two sub-divisions in this section: the non-intelligent intruders, which can appear in any shape and form; and the intelligent, and mainly of humanoid appearance, intruders.

These films can be best explained by covering the more representative of the crop. The usual heroes of these films are men (and occasionally women) of either scientific or military profession, and almost single-handedly save the world from some great menace. This area, incidentally, is not to be confused with the cycle of revived-monsters and oversize-creatures due to unchecked atomic-testing/radioactivity. There are, of course, thematic parallels but the cause and cure in these pictures are quite a separate entity; the atomically-created monsters have their roots elsewhere, and are worthy of discussion in an entirely separate article.

The major significance of these aliens is their size and lack of intelligence. Their presence on Earth is usually by accident, either falling into the atmosphere or being unwittingly brought back by space-explorers. Either way, their threat is all-consuming, powerful enough to ravage towns and countryside in an apparently unstoppable path of destruction.

The Blob (1958) is a fine example of the ever-growing non-intelligent alien mass that threatens to consume an entire town and its population. The gelatinous mass is brought to Earth inside a meteorite, which then spreads itself and gains size by devouring any human that comes in contact with it. **The Blob**, while serving as an excellent example of the deadly Extra-terrestrial mass, is equally representative of late-1950s sf cinema wherein the leading characters are teenagers. The premise of this strain is that all teenagers are basically fun-loving and irresponsible, so when they are elevated to a position of vast importance (being the first to discover an alien threat and to inform the authorities) their insistence is disregarded and ignored. This group usually devise their own way to deal with the threat, and end up in saving the community.

The scientist/hero is seen to best advantage in **Kronos** (1957) and **The**

Monolith Monsters (1957), both of which feature gigantic alien monstrosities that are finally defeated in a non-military effort. **Kronos** features a mountainous robot machine which has been sent to Earth to drain the energy. It takes the scientists a long time to figure it out but finally they come through with a self-destruct plan against the machine, and save the world. The other example gives us crystals that arrive by meteor, increase their size when wet, and have the ability to drain the silicon out of human bodies, turning them to stone. This was the premise of **The Monolith Monsters**, and the immediate threat was that they moved – in this case, in the direction of a small town. The leading scientist (Grant Williams) eventually discovers that salt can be used as a destructive element and (more by way of luck) manages to check and destroy the monoliths. Usually, the simplest of means is discovered to confront the Extra-terrestrial forces – this usually occurs after everything else more powerful has been unsuccessfully tried.

20 Million Miles to Earth (1957) enlists the military hero, who is similarly faced with an all-powerful force – in this film a ferocious Venusian lizard creature (animated by Ray Harryhausen) which grows to massive proportions. However, in

20 Million Miles to Earth most assaults on the creature fail, and it finally has to be blown off the top of Rome's Coliseum to crash to its death. What this movie actually reveals is man's extreme cruelty to something that he doesn't understand, and fails to contain in a captive state. The Venusian creature is deliberately brought back to Earth whilst in its egg-stage, and once it starts growing everybody tries to kill it. After having several narrow escapes the creature is finally hunted down and killed. This unfortunate creature develops into something of a pathetic King Kong caricature, being taken from its home and slayed in an "alien" environment.

Another type of alien form is brought back to Earth in the body of an astronaut, in **The Quatermass Experiment** (1956, aka **The Creeping Unknown**). The alien in this film consumes the astronaut and develops into a large fungus-creature, which is finally cornered in Westminster Abbey and electrocuted.

In **Howard Hawks/Christian Nyby's The Thing (from Another World)**, 1951) the alien is a tall, smooth, Frankenstein Monster-like being – later to be revealed as vegetal, with a life-sustaining thirst for blood. The creature is discovered in a remote Arctic region, and most of the film takes place in the forbidding confinement of



Above: The only existing still from *War of the Worlds* (1953) to feature the alien—hardly surprising as the creature only appeared in the film for a split-second. Opposite: The rare poster for *Invisible Invaders* (1959).

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a Polar encampment. As soon as the alien becomes active it also becomes an immediate threat to the inhabitants (a quarrelling mixture of scientists and military men). The suspense and drama of *The Thing* mainly involves stalking in and out of rooms and trying to combat the hostile alien - which also has the ability to reproduce itself at an alarming rate. Though highly localised the film unfolds not only as man's first encounter with an Extra-terrestrial life form - but as an ultimate fight for the preservation of life on Earth. *The Thing* - by being set in a remote part of the world and involving a small group against alien hostility - became a yardstick for countless imitators.

A similar blood-lust theme is explored in Roger Corman's *Not of This Earth* (1956), in which a blank-eyed alien - his breed dying due to "blood-evaporation" - arrives to survey the possibility of using Earth as their blood-bank. The alien assumes human form, complete with hat and suit, and pursues his grisly task until he is eventually discovered and killed. The pessimistic ending of the film shows another alien arriving to continue the preparation work.

The continual underlying tone of these singular-alien visitations, during this de-

cade, was that Earth was always open to invasion from "out there" and that Earth people had to always be on the lookout for alien intruders. With the "Cold War" influence on Americans, this area of sf is fairly easy to analogue.

Both *Phantom from Space* (1953) and *Beast With a Million Eyes* (1955) make this "influence" more evident in alien interference with the lives of normal people. *The 27th Day*, released in 1957, took up an alternate thread by introducing an alien who gives five different Earth people a weapon capable of destroying human life. This weapon, comprising of capsules, will not kill any other form of life on Earth, and is aimed at testing the human ability to live in peace. The general idea being that should the humans decimate themselves these beings from another world can then migrate to Earth. At a point when America and Russia appear to be on the verge of open warfare, the dilemma is resolved and both international and inter-planetary peace reigns once more.

The sf film in the Fifties treated the discovery of Extra-terrestrial life forms - whether they landed by accident, were brought back to Earth, or were merely forced to land for a short time - as immediately hostile, and automatically

issued them with a death-certificate. This unreasoning fear of something strange in our midst (at the time heavily induced by the "Cold War") brought about all kinds of insecurity, and the only reaction was distrust, attempted suppression, and finally annihilation of the alien form.

Invasion by Extra-terrestrial Life Forms

This third, and last, area opens up two more sub-divisions: the singular advance scout, preparing the way for a later mass invasion which aims to take over the entire world; and the all-out, organised invasion by a large force of aliens, backed up by an arsenal that appears to contain the ultimate in super-scientific weaponry.

The purpose of an alien invasion was usually for the preservation of the species, the search for a new planet on which to continue their race. Earth was always picked for being just right, the perfect spot to colonise - just as soon as all the Earth people had been decimated. If previous battles with aggressive blobs and anti-social creatures seemed a fairly easy thing to cope with, then it was because all available resources were utilised to destroy the singular threat. Now, man's presumed scientific superiority was being challenged

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ABDUCT ITS WOMEN!
LEVEL ITS CITIES!



by a highly organised force of advanced power and mobility. Compared to the invaders, Earth was a disorganised mess heavily involved in hostilities within itself.

The first sub-division was the most commonly depicted in Fifties sf films – the invasion vanguard. *Killers from Space* (1954) tells the story of a group of aliens who are busy breeding gigantic carnivorous plants in preparation for a full-scale invasion. *Invaders from Mars* (1953) has a group of Martians paving the way for full invasion by kidnapping humans, operating on them, and then despatching them to sabotage military installations. These are examples of alien invasions which, like most of their kind, are immediately hostile and utilise humans for their take-over purposes. *The Man from Planet X* (1951) approached the whole concept from a totally different angle. In this film a lone alien lands in Scotland and, when discovered, appears friendly – nevertheless, it receives harsh treatment from the local residents (another stranger-in-their-midst syndrome). Just as it looks like being another “human distrust of an outsider” situation, such as with the earlier *The Day the Earth Stood Still*, it is revealed that the alien intruder is in fact an advance-guard ready to signal a full-scale invasion. It is destroyed before the signal is sent, but the experience has now sown new seeds of doubt in the human mind – not to trust any alien however friendly it originally appears.

It Conquered the World (1956), Invasion of the Saucer Men (aka Invasion of the Hell Creatures, 1957), *I Married a Monster from Outer Space* (1958), and *Invisible Invaders* (1959) all have similar invasion patterns, dealing with invasion-underway situations. Mainly covering small

groups of invaders, the action taking place in these films is a token representation of an already-active invasion of Earth. *Earth vs the Flying Saucers* (1956) shows us an organised group of aliens, with their saucers, who openly declare their intended invasion of Earth. Before things are really underway, scientists have created a powerful weapon that creates enough destruction to eventually eliminate the invasion force.

Now, the second sub-division covers the full-scale, all-out invasion from outer space. Don Siegel's *Invasion of the Body Snatchers* (1956, see *Starburst* 7), and Hammer's *Quatermass II* (aka *Enemy from Space*, 1957) centre on the invasion headquarters, usually located in a remote community. Both films utilise the same overthrow technique – the stealing of human identity and subsequent replacement with unemotional duplicates. Siegel's film takes place in a small California town where all the residents have been “taken over” and the town doctor/hero remains, along with his girlfriend, unaffected. The hero, here, is not so much concerned with actually battling the aliens but with trying to escape and convince the authorities of the invasion. The alien takeover in this film has been analogically compared to Communism, but the statement that the film makes takes its exit elsewhere – however, the “pods” featured in this film are not unlike a reflection of some contemporary societies.

The 1957 Hammer film, *Quatermass II*, features a large research-plant setting for its invasion HQ, which is in fact acclimatisation centre for the invaders. The place is manned by locals who have been “taken over” by the alien powers. Alien influence, by way of dehumanising, has already reached the proportions of Government officialdom – this, again, is what might be termed as a “silent invasion”. Whereas *Invasion of the Body Snatchers* leaves us on a note of incredible insecurity, *Quatermass II* resolves its situation by finally exterminating the Extra-terrestrials and curbing the invasion.

War of the Worlds, producer George Pal's 1953 contribution (see *Starburst* 4), visualises its Martian invasion in a most direct manner. The Martians land and automatically begin wiping out civilisation, their sole motivation being the complete conquest of Earth. Initially starting off with something of a Pearl Harbor effect, everything is used against the Martian war machines (including God and the A-bomb). The film was set in contemporary California – mainly Los Angeles – and begins with a spacecraft landing in the mountains. At first, communication is sought, under the truce of a white flag, but the war machines seek no parley and carbonise the men where they stand. After that the countryside is covered with hovering Martian war machines and a path of wholesale destruction ensues (this; we are



told, is occurring all over the world), with the remaining humans left to huddle together in the ruins of a church. Los Angeles is completely destroyed, and all human hope is gone – Earth and its inhabitants have finally succumbed to the ultimate fate. The entire film is one mass path of total annihilation, with every human effort to stop the invading Martians smashed – until the war machines slowly start grinding to a halt and crash in the streets. All of man's technology (in the Fifties) had been unable to halt the invaders, but Nature proved more powerful than anything. The Martians are killed by Earth's common germs.

The invaders in this film are far more advanced than the human race and prove this throughout the film – but they relate their superiority in warfare by our terms. In other words, whereas most previous invaders used the route of a 'silent invasion', controlling minds and bodies, the invasion force of *War of the Worlds* sets about Earth by way of supreme destruction and loss of life. This is essentially man's way of waging war. Should any socio-political analogies be made of Fifties sf films, then *War of the Worlds* comes much closer to the real "fear" than any of the later subversion themes.

In Japan's *The Mysterians*, released 1959, the central storyline concerns an alien invasion of Japan in order to kidnap human women for breeding. However, the method they use is somewhat similar to *War of the Worlds* – mass destruction. Warfare,

again, is on a grand scale, using spaceships, deadly rays, and even a gigantic robot, which allows Toho Studios to raze most of Japan to the ground. This film is more involved with the special effects and the Japanese mastery of filmic holocaust than with any social analogies. The invaders are eventually beaten, but nowhere near as subtly conceived as in the George Pal production.



Yet another zombie, this time from *Invisible Invaders* (1959).

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Over the years the Science Fiction Cinema has dealt out a most indifferent attitude toward any interference by Extra-terrestrial life forms, whether the intrusion is benevolent or accidental. The general theory, it seems, is that Earth can do without any Extra-terrestrial advice (more important by 1950s ideology than by that of today). Usually the inherent sense of distrust results in open hostility, and when the blobs and savage creatures started arriving on Earth the Fifties hero knew exactly which strategy to put into operation. Rarely did the 50s sf movie attempt any form of understanding – the strong military presence always winning out by being allowed to "blast them aliens". However, when large-scale invasion forces began arriving and wreaking havoc, the sense of Earth superiority (with its intelligence and 50s advancing technology) seemed only to flicker in comparison to the invading aliens. If the movies showed that any singular alien intruder could eventually be stopped, then they also showed that when it came to an all-out inter-planetary war Earth may not be fully capable of staying the distance.

The Star Trek Interviews - Part 1

Another *Starburst* exclusive. The first in a mini-series of two interviews with *Star Trek* stars—with a difference. This month we talk to the film's original director before the movie plans were dropped, marked reserved for television . . . and next month we interview the new girl crew member of the USS Enterprise when the project became a movie—or *The Motion Picture*—again.

PHILIP KAUFMAN

Interview conducted by Tony Crawley

Bearded Phil Kaufman was shaved from the *Star Trek* movie—when the entire project had its throat slit in May, 1977, and became a TV format idea once again.

Part of the bustling (and bearded) San Francisco film-making community (Coppola, Lucas, Ritche, Kory, Ballard, etc.), the Chicago-born Kaufman has finally come of age as a director with his re-make of *Invasion of the Body Snatchers* (see the Kaufman interview, last issue). He has since made one of the gang-movies, *The Wanderers*—and a new story, written in cohort with George Lucas, *Raiders of the Lost Ark*, goes into production next year.

Probably more due to his *White Dawn* film



than any other, Kaufman was first choice of both Trekker-in-chief Gene Roddenberry and Paramount Pictures when the idea for promoting the cult tv series into full feature film form came into being. Kaufman wrote his own original script—very original. He collected his stars; he, for one, had little trouble in securing Leonard Nimoy's return as Spock—Nimoy became "difficult", as they say, later during Paramount's on-off-on-off game. Kaufman had made all his plans and was about to begin shooting in London when the whole deal was abruptly terminated.

Now, Phil Kaufman talks for the first time about the slaying of his *Star Trek* movie—and just where he had intended taking Kirk, Spock and the rest of the USS Enterprise crew . . .

Starburst: How far along were you on your *Star Trek* film when Paramount pulled the plug?

Kaufman: It was very close to go. My wife, Rose and I were going to move to London in a couple of months . . .

London?
Yes, we were going to shoot at Pinewood studios, use that big 007 stage there, I guess. Ken Adam was already back in London after a number of trips to the States, designing the sets—the whole production, in fact. Ralph McQuarrie, George Lucas' sketch artist, had already moved to London to be working with Ken.

A go situation?

Definitely. When I first got on *Star Trek*, they were going to make a small, \$3-million rip-off, really. In the course of the eight months I was on it, the budget had grown to \$10-million, and it was suddenly realised by the other people in Hollywood that this was a major project, that there was a lot of excitement about science fiction. The guys at Paramount at that moment just didn't recognise it. But at a meeting with Paramount, one of those high-level meetings with my lawyer, my agent—a big pow-wow!—I was given an absolute go-ahead. "This is it!" they said. "Go in and finish up the

script. We love your concepts. You have the movie. It's your movie and, honest injun, this movie will be made!"

So, it was a go-movie.

So, why didn't it go?

There had, apparently, been some other things going on . . . A week later, it was off. Unbeknownst to me, there was a new little unit of guys who have subsequently disappeared from the earth, known as The Fourth Network boys. They had arrived at Paramount and the guys that were running Paramount had come out of television themselves, and so they were interested in this idea of creating, fundamentally, an





Opposite below: *The original Starship Enterprise*. Above: *The gang's all here*. Spock (Leonard Nimoy), Kirk (William Shatner) and McCoy (DeForrest Kelly) on the bridge.



entire new American tv network. They looked around, looked high and low, for a scheme to start this new network off on a high level. They spotted this programme that was doing so well in syndication re-runs, *Star Trek*.

And at some high level meeting - another pow-wow, after I'd been given the go - a battle raged between the feature film people at Paramount and the Fourth Network boys. And the Fourth Network boys walked off with *Star Trek* . . . with the bleeding head of *Star Trek*. Or whatever part of it was bleeding.

How did you hear this?

I got a call. I was at home. I remember that morning. There were some problems that I hadn't quite worked out in the script. I'd been up all night, actually. Rose got up and I said, "Rose, this is it!" and I outlined the whole thing to her and she said, "Great, that's terrific - you've solved all those problems!" Then the phone rang - cancel! The film was off.

And you went crazy?

Well, I ran to the studio and started saying, "But you don't know science fiction movies . . . you don't understand what's going to happen here." And they said, "No

Below left: McCoy, medical officer of the *Enterprise*, as he appears in *Star Trek the Motion Picture*. Below right: Captain Kirk has been promoted to Admiral in the new film.



science fiction film has ever made more than \$19-million" - which is what 2001 had made at the box-office. "And that's a hell of a lot better than anything you'd ever be able to do... or anyone else, come to that."

They sure had a lot of confidence in you!

"But," I said, "there's a movie coming out next week that my friend, George Lucas, did. It's called *Star Wars*..." And they said, "Yeah, yeah, boring, boring..." I

said, "Wait! Just please wait." They said, "We're sorry we're busy, we can't wait". Knowing they had all the cards, they wanted to end the meeting as quickly as possible. The guys at Paramount at that moment just didn't know what they had. Every one else did. I mean, people were shocked when it was cancelled, because there was a feeling of "*Star Trek* will make a great





movie, it will be successful."

Paramount knew better, of course!

For a year, they developed *Star Trek* as a television show again, trying to shoot a

"When I first got onto *Star Trek*, they were going to make a small \$3 million rip-off movie."

pilot film. After *Star Wars* became the biggest movie in history, after *Close Encounters* became the third biggest, or whatever it is [eighth] in history, and after the Fourth Network boys had evaporated, they began to turn it into a feature film again.

Without you.

I was not asked to do it. I was busy, anyway, but more probably I had alienated some of

Below left: *Something strange is happening in the Transporter Room. From the tv series.*

Left: An assailant stalks Lou Grosset in Philip Kaufman's earlier film *The White Dawn* (1974). Says Kaufman: "We felt this film was science fiction."

the people at Paramount.

Paradoxically, you're now going through the same operation in reverse. Corporate thinking disregarded your view about the coming impact of sf films. But you were the first director in town to announce what's now known as a gang-movie, and all Hollywood

"My original *Star Trek* story was a mystery. The crew of the Enterprise had disappeared and only Spock was left."

copied you so fast they beat you into the cinemas. What's happened - has Hollywood grown up at last?

I don't know. Maybe the fact that I was from them about science fiction had something to do with it. Maybe they'd heard that *Invasion of the Body Snatchers* was going to be a success. Then, there was a little movie called *Saturday Night Fever*, which suggested a gang movie. And the other element was that my film, *The Wanderers*, was the first to be announced by the new Orion company, run by the former United Artists production people - the business of the business really. I don't think it was just my getting involved with gang-movies that kicked it off. I'd been trying for four years to make this movie, *The Wanderers*. But

everybody was waiting to know what Orion was going to do. And what it was going to do was this movie which they'd all seen and turned down, with all that dirty talk like they had in *Saturday Night Fever*! And right away, they jumped. Walter Hill was busy preparing a Western when *The Wanderers* was announced. He called me and was talking to me about his plans. And then, *wham!* His film, *The Warriors*, just came into being, shot and released overnight almost, and all the others were rushing in with batteries of editors and teams going. But they're all different. Mine is essentially a comedy, bittersweet in its outlook.

*An amazing turnabout of events, though. Is more secrecy required in announcing new movies. Spielberg refused to talk too much about *CE3K* because he didn't want to see it ripped-off by tv, and turning up in *Laverne and Shirley*.*

More secrecy is needed - or it will pop up on television. It's a big rip-off business... Where were you going to take the *USS Enterprise*? You told us last month that your script was largely built around Spock.

"I told the studio, 'there's a movie coming out next week called *Star Wars*' and they said 'Yeah, yeah! Boring, boring!'"

I don't want to go too much into it... Because they're going to rip it off, and I believe that I still own that story. And maybe without the *Star Trek* people, we could make it something.

Can you give us a hint?

Well, it was a mystery. An *Enterprise* mystery - the crew of the *Enterprise* had disappeared and only Spock was left. Only Spock had been hidden deep in his vault as to what had gone wrong. Spock filled with shame. Returns to Vulcan. Large Vulcan sequences. A woman arrives who is going to explore his mind and take him on an adventure through time and space, to beginnings and endings. It was really a love story exploring Spock's human and inhuman sides. The opening shot, for example, was going to duplicate the original scene of the *Enterprise*, which you only saw one side of on television. We were finally showing you the reverse of that - Kirk walking from off-camera and swinging around and showing you this eleven-storey ship that was beneath them, with 430 people working. Hence the big stage at Pinewood. We needed that to construct something of the awesomeness of that spectacle.

Again, as you told us last month, you have a lot of respect for Leonard Nimoy?

Sure, an actor's actor... He isn't connected with the star thing. Leonard, I knew, was peeved with *Star Trek* for the years, because they did not recognise his particular contribution to the series, and they were collecting all kinds of things and Leonard



wasn't receiving any benefit from that. He was trapped by *Star Trek*. People say, "Oh, he's Spock, the guy with the pointed ears." In working with him on *Star Trek*, I just got to know Leonard and really felt he's a warm, compassionate guy and a wonderful actor. You know that he wrote that book, *I Am Not Spock* - trying to tell people, "Please give me a chance to do something else." That's why when the *Star Trek* collapsed as a feature, I decided that Leonard should play the psychiatrist in *Body Snatchers*. There was a little bit of objection. The usual thing. "Oh he's the

know for sure, these rumours have just been going along, back and forth in Hollywood. Leonard is an honorable man and he would not tell me negative things about it. But I think they still have things to shoot. I've also heard that the budget is now well into the twenties [\$20-million-plus] that Bob Abel who was doing the special effects is not doing them any more and that *Close Encounters'* Doug Trumbull is now on it. They will probably have wonderful effects. Doug Trumbull is very talented. *You don't sound very impressed?*

My feeling, and I had some disagreements with Gene Roddenberry along the way, was that even though there was a loyal following of the television show, you owe it to those people who have supported *Star Trek* all these years, to give them a film that is competitive, that goes beyond any other science fiction movie. On a adult level.

George Lucas has cornered the twelve-year-old market - and that's great. But *Star Trek* was always the show that dealt with things I'm fascinated by - the occult, the mysteries of space and so forth. So you've got to present something that will just blow them away and reward them for all the faith and energy they injected into some of the tv sequences, which in fact, were not very good. Some of them were terrific, some of them were terrible. But the fans saw them *all* as being good. Because, essentially, they imagined them as you would imagine a radio show - the beauties of *Star Trek* were beneath the visuals.

Robert Wise is fine, but it sounds a huge pity

they let you go . . . You're really into science fiction and the by-products, the occult, religious rituals, aren't you?

Sure, I've been interested in science fiction for a long time. I've written things into my films that connect with it. Even in my Western *The Great Northfield Minnesota Raid*, there are elements of it. There's a woman who magically tries to heal Cole Younger's wounds. She does this little, mystical country dance around him and warns him, with portents and omens, not to go on the raid - and he has these kind of fore-visions of what we're going to see later

"Bob Abel, who was doing the special effects for *Trek*, is not doing them any more and *Close Encounters'* Doug Trumbull has taken over."

"*Star Trek* was always the show that dealt with the things I'm fascinated by—the occult, the mysteries of space and so on."

guy with the pointy ears and stuff", But we signed him and he was fine, like my entire cast. As I said before, Leonard used to say, "If only we could do this every day for the rest of our lives, we would have happy lives." It was great fun working every day.

*What have you heard about Robert Wise's version of *Star Trek*?*

Wise is a nice man. He did a great science fiction movie; at least one (*Day the Earth Stood Still*, *Andromeda Strain*). But I've heard they've shut down for a while now, that they've got script problems. I don't

in the movie.

And you've probably haven't seen *The White Dawn*, my film set in the Arctic. In the way we photographed it, we felt it was science fiction. The landscape. Three guys whose space vehicle, which happened to be a whale boat, crashes on this shore of this other-worldly place. The opening was a black and white prologue which suddenly turns into colour - which in turn is almost monochromatic anyway because all you see are these black figures on a white landscape. Then, they encounter strange creatures, dressed in furs with little bone

goggles, speaking other languages. In a sense it's not just Americans - it's earthlings, as we know them, trying to communicate with these other beings - Eskimos ... or whatever planet these people live on. *Sounds like The Empire Strikes Back is copying you, being set, some of the time, on the ice-bound planet of Hoth - shot in Norway. Any sf touches in your gang movie?* Of course! In fact there is one whole gang that almost falls into the area of being a science fiction gang - The Ducky Boys. They live in a strange neighbourhood under the elevated train tracks, where they're never struck by sunlight. They're all under five feet tall, and there's hundreds of them. At one point some of The Wanderers following a girl they're trying to pick up, find they're into Ducky Boy country - which is really one of those neighbourhoods of a city that

"I've heard that the budget for *Star Trek* is well above the twenty million dollar mark and rising."

you don't go into. We don't really know what the inhabitants look like because we don't go into those places. They're populated by one group or another.

*Whatever happened to your *White Dawn* film? It hardly showed here.*

It was released in the States and got very good reviews. It didn't do all that well in its initial run in New York but ran in Seattle and Portland for 26 weeks. It's still revived all the time. I think it had a very limited run in Britain. It was never shown to the rest of the world, probably because it was too documentary for some people's tastes - and

"When I decided that Leonard Nimoy should play the psychiatrist in *Body Snatchers* there was a little bit of objection."

it wasn't sensational enough. I mean, Paramount say, "It's the best movie we've ever made" and this and that.

*It ought to be seen before *The Empire Strikes Back*, I think.*

Maybe if *Saturday Night Fever* had not been so successful, it would have been seen again. That's when Paramount were talking about re-releasing it. They were going back over their inventory and suddenly they didn't need to release anything from stock.

Next month. *Starburst* talks to the newest addition to the crew of the *Starship Enterprise*, former Miss India and award winning actress, Persis Khambatta, who portrays the bald-headed navigator from the planet Delta in *Star Trek the Motion Picture*. Don't miss it!



Opposite and above: "*White Dawn* was about three guys whose space vehicle crashes in this other wordly place. They encounter strange creatures, dressed in furs, with whalebone goggles and speaking other languages." Philip Kaufman.

SF POSTER GALLERY

So enthusiastic has response been to our regular centrespread poster every month that we have decided to go one better (thirteen better, in fact) and give you fourteen. Special thanks must be extended to the film distribution companies who originally produced the posters and who still hold copyright.



A colourful Belgian poster for the original Flash Gordon, measuring 14x18 inches. Although the colours tend to be a bit wild, the poster is nevertheless a pleasing item and much sought-after by collectors.



A rare 1954 re-release of Universal's Flash Gordon's Trip to Mars, featuring a montage of exciting scenes surrounding a portrait of our hero, Larry "Buster" Crabbe as Flash Gordon. The titles are in both French and Flemish.

GRAND NATIONAL FILM DISTRIBUTORS present

BUSTER CRABBE

in, the death-defying, cliff-hanging adventures of...



FRANK LAMOTH
VERSION 1973
"THE FIRST 13"

FLASH GORDON

The quad poster for this re-release, featured here, is not really as exciting as it could be, but does feature a nice photo-reproduction of the leading players, Jean Rogers and Buster Crabbe. Probably the greatest science fiction serial hero ever, Flash Gordon was re-released again in 1973—in a cut-down version of the 13-chapter 1936 serial.

DALEKS - INVASION EARTH 2150 A.D.

TECHNICOLOR

TECHNISCOPE



An excellent one-sheet English poster for the Dr. Who tv spin-off, *Daleks Invasion Earth 2150 A.D.* Boasting Technicolor and Techniscope, the poster, once again, proved more visually exciting than the movie. However, for an English fantasy film poster it remains a delightful item.



CHARLTON HESTON LEIGH TAYLOR-YOUNG
LE SECRET DE LA HET GEHEIM VAN DE
SOYLENT GREEN

CHUCK CONNORS JOSEPH COTTEN BROOK PETERS PAULA KELLY
 EDWARD G. ROBINSON

SCREENPLAY BY ROBERT CROUCH & ROBERT SHAPIRO
 BASED UPON THE NOVEL BY PHILIP K. DIK

PRODUCED BY ROBERT SHAPIRO
 DIRECTED BY CHARLTON HESTON

The *Soylent Green* poster is one of those remarkable items of advertisement that proves to be more exciting than the actual film. The artwork and the likenesses are excellent, and the whole concept captures the "spirit" of the film perfectly.



The Belgian release poster of the Richard Matheson/Steven Spielberg tv movie comes across as a ferocious piece of advertising. The French poster—the size of a vast American three-sheet—features the same artwork.



PHASE IV
 When you can't scream anymore!

**RAVENOUS INVADERS
 CONTROLLED BY
 A TERROR OUT IN SPACE...
 COMMANDED TO
 ANNIHILATE THE WORLD!**

PRODUCED BY ROBERT CROUCH & ROBERT SHAPIRO
PHASE IV A NIGEL DAVENPORT MICHAEL MURPHY
LYNNE FREDERICK MAYO SIMON PAUL B. RADIN SAUL BASS

Somehow one feels that the artwork could have been stretched to cover the entire quad. Title-designer Saul Bass's directorial debut was not as earth-shattering as many expected—the distributor's poster design appears more representative of George Pal's *The Naked Jungle* than of "Ravenous invaders controlled by a terror out in space . . ."



Once it catches the eye the effect can be quite dramatic. Somehow it seems that the *Logan's Run* publicity overshadows the film itself; lots of colour, exciting characters and locations, and a suitably "futuristic" style to the artwork.



A beautiful little Belgian poster for the sf classic *This Island Earth*. All the dramatic elements of the film are represented in this poster which, again, blends artwork with photo illustration.



This Belgian poster is another handsome collector's item which features full-colour artwork for the famous movie serial. The poster is—despite the costume colour errors—a splashy illustration.



MGM PRESENTS A STANLEY KUBRICK PRODUCTION

2001 a space odyssey

Super Panavision®
and Metrocolor

One of the various **2001: A Space Odyssey** quad posters—it's obvious, however, that this epic film cannot be captured, by way of exploitation, on one poster alone. The *starchild* quad is one of the duller, while this is one of the best from the film's initial release. The featured artwork, not forgetting the colour, is nothing short of superb.



Way back in **Starburst 5** our featured *SF Classic* was the John Carpenter mini-masterpiece **Dark Star**. And across our centre-spread we printed the Oppidan poster for the film. Since then we have come across an alternative version from the talented brush of Tom Chantrell, artist on the British release poster of *Star Wars*.



The *Westworld* poster—an English quad—is wholly representative of the film it exploits. The Yul Brynner robot-gunfighter highlights the theme of the film perfectly; our two featured heroes are seen on the console screens; the dramatic variation of the unique pleasure-resort gone crazy is underlined in the “And nothing can possibly go wrong...” ad line.



The British poster for the Philip Kaufman re-make of *Invasion of the Body Snatchers*, like the original 1956 poster (see the *Starburst* 7 centrespread), is something of an understatement. In fact it is not until *after* seeing the new film that the full horror of the poster hits home.

LOST IN SPACE

Unseen since *Starburst 2*, our irregular ongoing Telefantasy series continues this issue with a retrospective look at Irwin Allen's science fiction television series *Lost in Space*.

Feature by Richard Hollis

In 1964, when Gene Roddenberry submitted his story treatment for *Star Trek* to the CBS tv network the bosses turned the show down because they had already bought a science fiction series for the new season. The series was *Lost in Space*, produced by Irwin Allen who had earlier created the highly successful *Voyage to the Bottom of the Sea* for the ABC tv network.

Allen started work on *Lost in Space* in 1964. At first he planned a television series of his enormously successful 1961 film *The Lost World* using the same cinema-to-tv principle that he utilised for *Voyage to the Bottom of the Sea*. Foiled by the failure to put this idea into practice Allen went ahead with a purpose-made tv pilot originally calling it *Space Family Robinson* and basing it on the stories published in the Gold Key comics of the same name. Irwin Allen's pilots are always vastly expensive and *Space Family Robinson* was no exception to the rule, laden with excellent special effects and model work, it told how the Robinson Family crash-land on an alien planet and encounter all sorts of dangers. The photography was by Winton Hoch, academy award winning cinematographer and cameraman on pre-

vious Irwin Allen features including the *Voyage* tv show.

The CBS television bosses loved it and the cast chosen for the pilot were given the go-ahead to feature in the series. The first season was to be made in black and white and consist of twenty-nine episodes, though Irwin Allen changed the title to *Lost in Space*.

Guy Williams already familiar to tv viewers as *Zorro*, in the Disney series of the same name, played Professor John Robinson. June Lockhart star of the *Lassie* films played Maureen, his wife. Angela Cartwright, fresh from her role as Brigitta in *The Sound of Music* played Penny. Marta Kristen played Judy and Billy Mumy, Disney tv child star played Will. Mark Goddard star of *A Rage to Live* portrayed Major Don West, a romantic interest for Judy.

Allen, who involves himself in every aspect of his own tv shows, also added an "environmental control robot" a fascinating machine operated by Bob May with voice supplied by Dick Dupell and a new member of the crew Dr Zachary Smith played by Jonathan Harris. Irwin Allen

described the actor as, "the United Nations of the show world. He can portray any nationality and make you think he is a native of the country in question". Jonathan Harris was already well-known to viewers as Bradford Webster, Michael Rennie's assistant in the tv series *The Third Man*. So with the pilot supplying the adventures for the first five stories in the series (the pilot itself was never originally screened) *Lost in Space* went into production.

The year is 1997 and the first episode *The Reluctant Stowaway* shows the Robinson family, as a result of Earth's over-population being chosen to become the first pioneers into outer space. They are checked to be medically sound for the trip by Colonel Smith (the title only later became *Dr Smith*) and so happily board their spacecraft, a saucer-shaped, sophisticated rocket that will initiate man's thrust into space. The craft is called the Jupiter 2 and for most of the five year journey to Alpha Centauri the family are to be in a state of suspended animation. To pilot the spacecraft, Earth scientists install a robot, a fully functioning automaton that will act as a kind of "HAL 2000" checking on the family's state of health throughout the voyage. But Colonel Smith, an undercover agent for a foreign power, re-programmes the mechanical man to interfere with the ship's guidance control system causing it to malfunction after liftoff. It is because he is finalising the details of this sabotage that he becomes trapped on board when the Jupiter 2 blasts off. Once in space Dr Smith tries to prevent the renegade robot from accomplishing its task, but in the attempt the Jupiter 2 becomes helplessly lost in space. To try to regain control of the spaceship, Smith awakens the Robinsons from their frozen tubes.

Because of Dr Smith's continual interference in the voyage and his attempts to return to Earth, the Jupiter 2 crashlands on an uncharted planet. In fact this is a deliberate step taken by Major West in an effort to save Professor Robinson who is trying to repair the exterior hull of the spaceship. Consequently the spaceship remains grounded for repairs for the duration of the first season. This allows for some really solid adventures which gave the series a popular following. These first few episodes are exceptionally strong and the description "serial" could be used here rather than series, as each week a new



Above: Verda, the debris-collector from space (Dee Hartford) was so popular that she appeared in both "The Android Machine" and "Revolt of the Androids" in the second season. Opposite: The real stars of the show were Dr Smith and the robot as this publicity still shows.





adventure would begin with some hair-raising cliff-hanger from the previous episode. And the words "To be continued next week, same time, same channel" would appear at the conclusion of each instalment. This technique was used to greater advantage in the *Batman* tv series from the same studios.

After setting up an impenetrable force field around the grounded spaceship, the family construct their excursion vehicle, an amazing land tractor called the Chariot. (A working life-size version was built and could be driven on or off of the set.) With the Robinson family and Major West aboard, it trundles off across the planet to escape the incredible climate changes in the area where the Jupiter 2 crashlanded. Dr Smith refuses to go and remains behind with the robot and here we have a chance to witness the beginnings of a rapport between what would soon become the most popular duo in sf tv.

Whilst all this is going on, the Robinsons encounter hairy one-eyed giants and all sorts of freak weather conditions, bizarre electrical storms and frozen seas. After this

spectacular guided tour of the planet the viewers had to settle with adventures based in and around the Jupiter 2. The Chariot was used only occasionally, if at all, and considering the hostile environment made apparent in the first few episodes, the planet calmed down rather too suddenly. All subsequent threats seemed to stem from outer space. One excellent example of this is the episode entitled *Invaders from the Fifth Dimension*, when strange luminous creatures land on the unknown planet in a fantastic spacecraft designed - along with all the other hardware of the series - by the very talented team of designer/builders Robert Kinoshita and special effects experts L. B. (Bill) Abbott ASC and Howard Lydecker. Leith Stevens (composer for George Pal's sf classics *War of the Worlds*, *When Worlds Collide* and *Destination Moon*) supplied the atmospheric music and the story relates how the invaders want Dr Smith's brain to replace one of their burnt-out computers. He manages to trick the aliens into settling for Will's mind instead and only Will's quick thinking saves him from disaster.

A well-written episode to establish Dr Smith's obvious intentions to risk the lives of the Robinsons, in order to save his own neck.

Other episodes in this first series worthy of mention are *My Friend Mr Nobody*, in which Penny meets a cosmic force, and *Wish Upon A Star*, directed by Sutton Roley, an incredible adventure in which Dr Smith discovers a strange helmet in a derelict spaceship. It is capable of granting the wearer a certain number of wishes. Using this magical device Dr Smith wins himself back into the affections of the family, but John Robinson has to banish him from the Jupiter 2 because the helmet's powers create greediness amongst the Robinsons. Undaunted Smith returns to the derelict spaceship and using the helmet wishes himself into a life of luxury. Surrounded by all kinds of opulence, he wishes for a servant to wait on him. A door at the misty depths of the spacecraft opens and the helmet's original owner - a strange rubberoid alien - appears, to claim back its property.

In a two-part story entitled *The Keeper*,

Michael Rennie (*Day the Earth Stood Still*, 1951) stars as an alien, who arrives on the Robinson's planet in a gigantic spacecraft, collecting animals for an intergalactic zoo. In the first episode we discover how he tries to kidnap Will and Penny and cage them as examples of Earth creatures, but the constant battle to save them by the family wins his admiration and so he releases them. Unfortunately Dr Smith sees The Keeper's spacecraft as a chance to return to Earth. But in an attempt to work out the spaceship control panel he unwittingly releases all the caged animals - an amazing array of one-eyed monsters, flying bats, two-headed creatures, werewolves, a giant lizard and a monstrous spider. Together with Herman Stein's fabulous musical score, a section of the music from *Day the Earth Stood Still* featured in the episodes. In fact Michael Rennie's portrayal of The Keeper closely matched the cool intellectual Klattu of the 1951 film.

In *War of the Robots*, Will finds a disused robotoid (Robby from *Forbidden Planet*) and by repairing it unknowingly unleashes an evil power that is only just stopped in time by the Robinson's own faithful robot. By this time the robot was becoming an excellent foil for Dr Smith's witty remarks. An example of this from the episode, *The Raft*. Smith is addressing the robot about a large balloon outside the spacecraft.

Smith: Are you quite familiar with that bag of wind out there?

Robot: Quite familiar with bag of wind right here!

Smith: Indeed!

When the second series of *Lost In Space* appeared in 1966, it boasted 30 episodes all of which were in colour. The theme music, written by John Williams (*Earthquake*, *Towering Inferno*, *Superman*, etc.), remained the same although the credit sequence had altered slightly. The format was also the same, except in the opening episode the Jupiter 2 blasts off into space to escape the unknown planet's disintegration. This episode was directed by Nathan Juran as were other popular episodes during the series. Juran, who also directed Ray Harryhausen's *Seventh Voyage of Sinbad* and *First Men In the Moon*, had a good visual flair which became apparent in episodes *The Ghost Planet*, *Prisoners of Space*, *West of Mars*, and *Wreck of the Robor*. Paul Zastupnevich, an assistant to the producer designed the clothes worn by the cast. Zastupnevich was recently nominated for an Oscar for his costumes in Allen's *The Swarm*. The stories constantly pitted the Robinsons against all sorts of adversaries, futuristic powers and evil aliens, fuelled at first by Dr Smith's wicked intentions (although by now a much more subdued villainy) and then defeated by Will's moral determination for good to triumph over evil.

With episode four of the second season,

the Jupiter 2 had crash-landed on another uncharted planet not unlike the first in landscape and atmosphere. Certainly the special effects of the Jupiter 2 swooping low over the alien terrain were convincing though the landscape reminded one more of Monument Valley than the lush semi-vegetation world the stories finally took place in. The planet-sets took up one of the largest sound stages at 20th Century-Fox. All location work was filmed in Red Rock Canyon, some miles from Hollywood.

The second season of *Lost In Space* also 'unfortunately' introduced the buffoonery that was to alienate the more critical viewers and a silliness that the more ardent fans hoped would only be a short term dissipation. But the tongue-in-cheek approach continued to rear its head in such episodes as *Space Circus*, *Curse of Cousin Smith*, *West of Mars*, *Space Vikings* and *The Astral Traveller*. The latter depicted Will and Dr Smith travelling back through time and space to 19th century Scotland, where the Doctor clashes with ghostly enemies of his ancestors.

By now the producers had thrown serious sf themes and in most cases logic out of the window. Dr Smith was the most popular character of the *Lost In Space* cast according to the fan mail, with the robot a close second. So if Dr Smith needed an ancient mariner's uniform or convict outfit, he would get one. This is known in show business as "theatrical licence" and featured prominently in the show.

With the commencement of the third season, *Lost In Space* had slipped slightly in the all-powerful Nielsen ratings, so

Irwin Allen gave the series a completely new look. The credits were changed, given a more streamline appearance with photos of the cast and John Williams added a new score. Gone were the cliff-hanger endings and viewers saw instead a compilation of next week's adventure. By now the main leads in the show, Guy Williams particularly, had complained to their agents about becoming secondary characters in the stories, not that this had feeling affected the cast's behind-the-scenes relationships. However to keep the peace Irwin Allen redirected the third season back towards family adventures. *Condemned of Space*, was the first of these which again featured Robby the Robot, this time as mechanical guard on a drifting prison ship. *Visit to a Hostile Planet* relates how the Jupiter 2 spirals back in time and lands on the Earth in the year 1947. Dr Smith decides to use the ever-present UFO scare in the local townspeople as a means of securing his chances to remain on Earth.

Probably the most far-fetched story of the third season was *Collision of the Planets*. Four space hippies are sent to destroy the Robinsons planet so they will become accepted by their own society. (A very topical subject in America at the time). Some of the space hippie's explosive chemicals fall into Dr Smith's hands turning him into a green-haired Samson. With the planet due to be destroyed, the Jupiter 2 sets off into space once more and all sorts of weird encounters take place. The family meet a creature that feeds on fear, before the Jupiter 2 plunges down and crashes on yet another alien world. Here



Opposite: *The Chariot* was a working, full-sized tractor which appeared in only a few episodes. Above: In the episode "Matlily In Space" an insane space pirate, Admiral Zahrk, kidnaps Will (Billy Mumsy) and Dr Smith (Jonathan Harris) and sails in search of his mutinous first mate.



Don West (Mark Goddard) and Dr Smith (Jonathan Harris) are framed and sent to the toughest prison in the Galaxy in the episode "Fugitives in Space". There they meet a criminal called Creech (Michael Conrad) who is planning to break out. So while Will and the robot are trying to free them, Don and Smith argue over whether to go along with Creech's escape plan.

they are forced to suffer evil female robots, a creature resembling the Metaluna mutant from *This Island Earth* and a fire-breathing dragon (footage from the AIP 1960 movie *Goliath and the Dragon*), Dr Smith turning the Jupiter 2 into a hotel called 'Smith's Happy Acres', an ice princess and a Mexican bandit who arrives via a comet and proceeds to threaten the Robinsons.

But in the last three episodes of the final season all kinds of strange alien creatures reared their heads. A survivor of a vast warrior race challenges the Robinsons to a battle in space. Dr Smith's interference causes a strange carrot creature to attempt turning the Robinsons into plants in *The Great Vegetable Rebellion* (He almost

succeeds when he transforms Dr Smith into a giant stalk of celery), and in *Junkyard in Space*, the Robinson Robot is captured on a strange world by a junk man who collects old space metal. But all is resolved in the end, the family are safe, the Jupiter 2 intact, the robot and Will united and only (as it should be) is Dr Smith unhappy with his lot.

And so ended the final episode of *Lost in Space*. By this time the cast were fighting an uphill battle against the fantastic adventures the writers kept dreaming up. A fourth season was not bought by CBS, so the sets were dismantled and the stars moved on to other things. In truth not much is heard of Guy Williams or Mark

Goddard. Marta Kristen married. Angela Cartwright after a spell in television commercials became Linda Williams in the comedy series *Make Room For Granddaddy*, and recently returned to the Irwin Allen fold to appear in his latest film, *Beyond the Poseidon Adventure*. Billy Mumy landed an ongoing role in the series *Sunshine*, a comedy drama made in 1975. June Lockhart moved into guest star roles. Irwin Allen went on to make *Land of the Giants*, a series by no means as popular as *Lost in Space* but containing some outstanding special effects. It only completed two seasons, so Allen moved back into feature film production with *The Poseidon Adventure*, the very popular *Towering*



Inferno and more recently *The Swarm*. Jonathan Harris' popularity on *Lost In Space* encouraged other producers to sign him up in guest star roles on *Ghost* and *Mrs Muir*, Rod Serling's *Night Gallery* and even as an eccentric pied piper in *Land of the Giants*. Since then his voice has been heard on Hanna-Barbera's *Banana Split* shows, as Dr Smith in an ABC Superstar movie cartoon show of *Lost In Space* which featured the adventures of the original crew's children, plus the robot and the Chariot, (all other voices were changed) and back in the flesh as Professor Issac Gampu in Filmation's *Space Academy* and most recently as the voice of Lucifer in *Battlestar Galactica*.

Compared to *Star Trek* - and it will continue to be - *Lost In Space* hardly ever came over as the kind of science fiction that would be accepted by the sf intellectual. Certainly the programme never suffered because of it. In fact in America today an ever-expanding fan club has sprung up in support of *Lost In Space*. And when the series first appeared, quite a lot of merchandise accompanied it. Aurora hobby kits produced three models from the show. In Japan various models of the Jupiter 2,

Above: In "The Sky Pirate" Will is kidnapped and later befriended by a space pirate, Tucker (Albert Salmi). Below: Will and his metallic friend pose for a studio publicity photograph.



the Chariot and the robot were also marketed. A series of gum cards appeared in 1966 featuring the first season and as already mentioned, 1973 heralded the premiere of an animated tv special of *Lost In Space*, with Jonathan Harris as the voice of Smith, picking up the part perfectly from where he left off in 1968.

Lost In Space was criticised in print recently as the worst space programme ever, a very unfair statement. On the contrary no other sf show of the sixties was so well-made and so technically exciting.

Lost In Space (1965-1968)

Guy Williams (Prof John Robinson), June Lockhart (Maureen Robinson), Mark Goddard (Don West), Marta Kristen (Judy Robinson), Billy Mumy (Will Robinson), Angela Cartwright (Penny Robinson), Jonathan Harris (Dr Zachary Smith), Bob May (Robot).

Executive producer and creator Irwin Allen, Story Editor Anthony Wilson, Special effects by L. B. Abbott and Howard Lydecker. Makeup by Ben Nye, Music by John Williams, Directors of Photography Gene Polito and Frank Carson, Costumes by Paul Zastupnevich. 83 episodes (54 in colour).

....THINGS..TO..COME....

Nosferatu Mk 2

After *Nosferatu*, West German *wunderkind* director Werner Herzog continues to have full Hollywood becking for his next ventures. These include *The Dreaming of the Green Ants*, his much talked of aborigine ritual film to be shot, obviously, in Australia—and *Fitzcarraldo*, destined for locations deep in Peru. What a lucky little Werner he is, to be sure. After *Nosferatu*, I'm surprised anyone would back him to shoot more than a church wedding. However, I do gather his risible re-working of the classic Murnau vampire yarn has apparently been re-edited (and hopefully, re-dubbed) after its quite disastrous early Press unveiling in February. But with *Nosferatu* and *Just a Gigolo* in one year, the West German filmic revival seems to have reached a sudden dead end. Dead and buried, that is.

Films to Miss

Producer Larry Woolner rides again, too. From his Dimension Pictures, he has eight films in release this year. Titles tell all... like stay at home. The list includes *Night Creatures*, *The Wettest Monster*, *Stone Cold Dead* and *The Beddest Men in Town*. Olivia Newton John does not appear in any of them.

Saturn News

As expected, despite denials at first, producer Stanley Donen took over the direction of *Saturn Three*, after writer-director John Barry's shock exit from the movie which should have been his helming debut. The science-fiction dreme stars Kirk Douglas, Harvey Keitel, a cute robot and Ferrah Whoosis. Lord Lew Grede is backing the venture and originally wanted Sean Connery and Michael Caine as his spacemen. They objected to British taxes. Lew doesn't seem to mind them and he's got to be worth more. He's levising \$18,000,000 on this particular Christmas present—which means it'll rival *Star Trek*. And why ever not?

Enter: Chicago

And the next of marvel is due from... Chicago? That's the news as we have it from Jack M. Sell, head of a Chicago combine specialising in tv commercials and documentaries. His 90-minute Penetration effort, *The Psychochronic Men* has been completed for less than half-a-million dollars, which sounds impossible. Lew Grede spends more on cigars. Jack Sell managed his next trick by shooting over a full year in his home town, using local, unknown actors... including his producer, Peter Spelson. The thriller unveils an uncontrolled wave of



Klaus Kinski bares his fangs in the Warner Herzog remake of *Nosferatu* (1979).

supernatural deaths through telekinesis. For once, the antagonist has no control over his subconscious powers. Before you write off Sells, remember George Romero and John Carpenter started this way, too, with home-town movies. Rest of the cast features Christopher Carbis, Robin Newton, Curt Colbert and a fellow celled Paul Marvel. Hope he is.

Hawaiian Journey

Who does a top tv star sign up for a series when he turns producer? The star in question is Jack Lord, whose lacquered quiff has rarely been blown by winds in eleven years of *Hawaii Five O*, the longest running series currently on US tv. His film company is making another series on the islands, *M Station: Hawaii*. Lord's choice for star: Jered Martin from *Fantastic Journey* and other sf shows. In fact, come to think of it, I've never seen Jered playing any role of this particular epoch.

Frame to Frame

Still they come... out of the comic books and strips. Now, scrumptious Sherry Jackson joins the fold as *Brande Starr*, girl reporter, from Del Messick's strips. Sherry's fine; her scripts are not! At least this series comes in a bettized format—30 minutes only, and made for local syndication tv deals. That way she could last, because the big three networks have had it with comics. They're more interested in comics. As in comedians. As in *National Lampoon's Animal House* people. As in MCA-tv's *Delta House* show from that film.

And as in Paramount tv's rival half-hour, *Brothers and Sisters*. Super-heroes are out—and college pret-fells are in. For the moment. The ABC network, for instance have ordered 35 new pilot shows—twenty of them are comedies. Can't be long before someone merges the two formulae and MCA backs a *National Lampoon*ing of a superhero. Who says it couldn't happen... can you just see Stephen Furst as *The Incredible Bulk*?

Within 24 hours of typing this paragraph, I hear from Aaron Spelling's *Starsky and Hutch* company that they are finalising a comedy project about a *Supermantype* character. Told you so!

Metamorphosis

Italy's Francesco Bereilli has completed *Metemorphosis*, about vegetation and animal mutations caused by chemical wastes on an ocean island...

Late Comer

Beauteous Barbere Carrera—she who helped liven up the deadly *Island of Dr Moreau*—is a last-minute addition to the cast of the ultimate disaster film, *The Day The World Ended*. She's joining Paul Newman, William Holden, Jacqueline Bisset, Edward Albert, Red Buttons, Ernie Borgnine, James Franciscus and—well, who else but Burgess Meredith. It's a fairly routine line-up for an Irwin Allan romp. If my time were up, I could think of better people I'd want to spend my last hours with... which is probably why I'm not a film producer. Before *World*, though, we can expect...

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Meteor Delayed Again
Special effects take time but . . . the big, brash **Meteor** film is now further delayed

because of them. Already held up (**Starburst No 6**) until a promised June opening, it's now postponed until October 19 in the United

States. Apparently the miniatures are causing the latest delays. With a budget of \$17,500,000 everyone's getting a mite nervous.

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Poseidon 2

Irwin Allen, almost the godfather of disaster fantasies, is also unwrapping another everyday story of upside-down folk in his sequel to 1972's *The Poseidon Adventure*. The new one has the thoroughly imaginative title of *Beyond The Poseidon Adventure*. Irwin says he makes *what if* films. "The first *Poseidon* asks, what if the world's greatest luxury liner was capsized by a giant wave? *The Towering Inferno* asks, what if the world's tallest skyscraper caught on fire?" Presumably, the new *Poseidon* flick asks, what if we re-make the original but call it a sequel and try to make all that lovely greenstuff all over again?

The story is about as explosive as before, only the studio and the passenger list has been changed. Peter Boyle, Shirley Jones, Jack Warden, Shirley Hopkins, Slim Pickens and Angela Cartwright (from the 83 episodes of Allen's *Lost In Space* tv series, 1965-8) are among those being rescued by top-siders Michael Caine, Telly Savalas, Karl Malden and Sally Field. Place your bets now for who makes it or not... Gene Hackman, obviously, did not go for Irwin Allen's first idea: to have Hackman starring again, playing the twin brother of his fiery cleric from the original. (Honest.)

More TV Flops

It's not been the best of seasons for American television. After *Supertrain*, Universal-MCA's bright idea about reviving thriller serials, *Cliffhangers*, got off to an extremely jerky start. The notion was good, the show wasn't. "Someone was wrong," said one critic. That says it all. The premise, as you may recall, was to have three serials inside an hour format. Ideas-man Kenneth Johnson (from the *Bionic* and *Hulk* shows) got everything off to a bad start by beginning the stories in the middle...

Beautiful Susan Anton headlined *Stop Susan Williams*, which started with a so-called Chapter 2—she's a femme photographer hunting up the big story that had her brother knocked off. Geoffrey Scott in *The Secret Empire* (beginning with Chapter 3) was a Western marshal on the trail of (Gene Autry's?) futuristic city hidden beneath the ranges. And Michael Nouri starred in *The Curse of Dracula* (Chapter 6, no less), and this modern-day vampire figure was about the best and is already rumoured to take off in a separate series. While such serials were the very stuff of children's Saturday matinees, they just didn't gell on modern television. Dick Barton has proved that in Britain.

If *Cliffhangers* is to continue, it too would need to go back to the drawing board. The actors (*My Favourite Martian* Ray Walston



Left: On the set (at Warner's studio now, not 20th Century-Fox), the action in *Beyond the Poseidon Adventure* looks not so different from before. Michael Caine and Sally Field (far right), assist passengers Peter Boyle, Shirley Knight, Angela Cartwright and bottle-hugging Slim Pickens. Above: Red Buttons, Carol Lynley, Ernest Borgnine and Jack Albertson (right to left) try to reach safety in the 1972 original.

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turned up in the Susan Anton segment) feel they're being short-changed. They're being paid half-hour fees, and they moan that the entire show is an hour in length. Universal suggest they're being very generous in paying for 30 minutes of screentime, when in fact each episode runs 20 minutes. Or a little less. Una must never forget commercials. Not in America, anyway. The money argument goes on, adding a genuine cliffhanging touch to *Cliffhangers* . . . and more tense than anything in the scripts, that's for sure. If the *Dracula* idea is promoted to a full-sized series, Universal could always replace it with a thriller about an actor striking for more money.

Quickies

New American sf movie coming soon is called *Terror In Outer Space*—isn't that original . . . ?

Merlette Hartley, who married The Hulk recently on tv, and died, of course, lives on as Dennis Weaver's wife in the six-hour tv series, *Celebrity Cop* . . .

Paramount-tv now spending \$107-million on new tv show ideas, including a futuristic number called *2100* to be directed by *Work and Mindy* alumnus, Joel Zwick . . .

Ex-Hammer-man Jimmy Sangster's new tv premise, *Harper and Company*, sounds like a mix of *The Four Just Men* and *Mission Impossible* . . .

Superman's "creative consultant", which is a posh word for re-write man or script doctor, Tom Mankiewicz, has won a writer-director deal at Warner Brothers. He made his directing debut with the pilot of the new tv suave detective series, *Hart To Hart*, starring Robert Wagner and Stefanie Powers . . .

Cultist fantasist Alexandro Jodorowsky (*El Topo*, etc) seems to be lowering his sights a bit with a biggie called *Tusk*, which sounds a rather elephantine answer to *Jaws* and company . . .

Space Station

You can actually tune into alien world in Los Angeles radio . . . Science-fiction dramas, has returned to the States. Taking a leaf out of BBC success, Station KNX-FM in LA is trying a thirteen-week series under the umbrella title, *Alien Worlds*. Every story is an original, with full backing music from the London Symphony Orchestra no less, plus bags of multi-channel recording techniques to attain the best FM sound-effects. They'll have to be real good to match the terrific BBC version of Asimov's *Foundation* and *Empire* trilogy, or the more recent Hi-Fi Theatre production of Bruce Stewart's stunning *Tor-Sands* Experience.

The KNX director, Merlay Brent, is confident of success, though. "We'll cover everything in



Donald Pleasence looks suitably menacing in this scene from John Carpenter's horror offering *Halloween*.

the science-fiction bag from the factual to total fantasy. Nothing in our music or sound effects will resemble the familiar aspects of old radio drama." Various Hollywood actors look like picking up extra bucks with the series. One two-parter play, *The Resurrectionists* of *Lethe*, for instance, will feature Hans Conrid, the unforgettable star of the 1953 movie *The Five Thousand Fingers of Dr T*.

Let's hope some one at the BBC is reeding this and arranges to swap the best of BBC sf for the best from KNX-FM. He'll have to edit out their Watermark Inc commercials though.

In the Wings

Latest futuristic fantasy item on the Hollywood launch-ped is: *Cade* by Jaff Segal. After the usual hassles of raising interest, money and then interest again, Segal's buyers have their budget together. Now all they need are their stars and a decent director. Lots of luck!

Creature Features

Try to spend Saturday night in San Francisco sometime soon. The local tv station, KTVU, has signed up local journalist, novelist and film-maker, John Stanley, to host the Saturday night monster movie—in the slot known as *Creature Features*. A certain Bob Wilkins started the series back in 1971 and denigrated every film. "Go to bed," he'd say. "This movie is worthless." John Stanley, who wrote, co-produced and directed *Nightmare in Blood*, is a leading horror genre authority, and should prove a far more informative host. "I'll be like a fan talking to a fan," he says.

Master Carpenter

John Carpenter's *Halloween* cost a mere \$320,000, which must be cheaper than the *Grease* trailer. The film is projected to gross \$20,000,000. Now that's successful! Even so, every major studio in Hollywood turned it down and Warner Brothers only just got into the act in time to buy it up for France and Germany. Carpenter is today's hottest young director in town, as a result of the horror film—and his *Elvis* tv movie. After *The Fog*, he'll write and direct *The Prometheus Crisis*.

Supergross

Superman is currently pushing Warner Brothers business to the highest grossing levels since the days of *The Towering Inferno*. Doesn't work everywhere, though. It's a flop in Italy, where parochial product is outclassing the film (if not the type) at the box-office. But it's expected to pull in \$20-million in Japan alone. Well, that's the effects paid for . . .

Title Switch

We don't want you should miss this Hollywood news-flash. If you don't make a note of this information, you may live to regret it. You might even be unlucky (?) enough to miss the film you've been hearing so much about, because now its title has been changed. So shape up, and make a note. We're only saying it once.

Airport '79—The Concorde is now going to be called . . . *The Concorde—Airport '79*. Not a lot of people know that. Even fewer actually care.

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George Rides Again

There's no film like a proven film. And so 20th Century Fox are re-releasing *Star Wars* for a second time around. The studio production chief, Alan Ladd Jr., has also made it clear that the George Lucas film hasn't and will never be sold to television, cablevision or even in video-cassette form. "We're going to treat it like a Disney film," he comments. Good thinking.



Cronenbergers

Canada's answer to George Romero, David Cronenberg starts shooting his new chiller in Toronto on September 15. It's called *The Sensitives* and if you're too sensitive, beware. Subject: ESP again. Cronenberg's last flick, *The Brood*—with Oliver Reed—is being released in Britain by Alpha Films' Stanley Long—and he's about to start moving into the fantasy area himself. Stan's *The Hypnotist*, by Adrian Read, starts shooting on August 1, as a \$2,000,000 Anglo-Canadian venture.

Star Truck

Dark are some of the tales coming out of the woods of Holly about the portentously titled *Star Trek—The Motion Picture*. West Coast visitors tell us that the film has been shut down—with script tangles. This has not as yet been confirmed by Paramount. We also hear that the Robert Abel Associates' special-effects team has taken a walk. This has been confirmed. "Creative differences" was the

usual euphemistic reason. Abel's very able crew is being replaced by various people (no complete unit, wa gather), and most of Abel's work already completed will, naturally,



remain in the movie. The official word is nothing is delayed. The film—sorry, *Motion Picture*—will still open in the States on December 7. The effects' bill alone is due to reach \$4-million by then.

Olivier vs Dracula

Lord Laurence Olivier has by now, at age 72, covered most aspects of the international movie scene. The gaps are being plugged this year. First, by entering the Gothic circle, as Van Helsing to Frank Langella's *Dracula*. Second, by joining the Charles Schnaar-Ray Harryhausen fantasy outfit. Lord Larry, white of hair and beard, plays Zaus, the ruler of Olympus in their new one, *Clash of the Titans*. Sure makes a change from Patrick Wayne...

Russell Bustle

Ken Russell looks set for his Hollywood debut with *Altered States*, by Paddy Chayefsky. Columbia Picture's new president, Frank Price, killed off the movie when the budget shot up from twelve to nineteen million dollars. But Warner Brothers picked up the project almost the same day, and came through with the lolly for shooting to start on March 22. Considering the huge success of the last Chayefsky scenario, *Network*, the dropping of this new one by any studio was something of a surprise. *Altered States* promises to do for the scientific world what *Network* did to tv (most of which has come about in the current ratings war, incidentally). It was a double lucky break for Russell. He had already seen his original Hollywood debut project,

Dracula, fall foul of those well-known creative differences, and took over the Chayefsky script after director Arthur Penn quit because of... you know, the same sort of differences. The high budget of the Russell film is due, also as per usual, to special effects.

Obituary

Sad blow for Britain's burgeoning special-effects squads—the untimely death of Les Bowie, at 65. His name, perhaps, was never as famous as such effects technicians as Trumbull, Meddings and Stears, but Les was an acknowledged expert in mattes and composites on all kinds of movies, from David Lean's *Oliver Twist* and *Great Expectations* to, naturally enough, both *Star Wars* and *Superman*.

As well as painting about 40 shots for *Superman* (thirty on glass, plus various scenes and backings, including Supie's view of earth from upon high), Les Bowie licked the major problem with *Superman's* suit—making the cape fly. He saw the difficulty from the outset, and he was right—wind machines alone did not make the capa flap about in realistic fashion. Les solved this with what can only be described as "motorised fishing-rods, operated by radio control." Christopher Reeve carried the batteries out of sight in his Supie-outfit, and once remote-controlled by radio at various speeds, his cape finally flew as well as he did. If not better.

Les Bowie was beginning his 33rd year in British movies when he died—while working on the *Dracula* film starring Frank Langella and Laurence Olivier. (Les Bowie's final interview about his craft can be found in the January or *Superman* issue of *American Cinematographer*).

Son of Quickies

John Barry will score Disney's *The Black Hole* of extravaganzas; John Williams *must* be busy...

Still no Merlin from John Boorman; he's producing *The Hard Way* the Irish way, with Patrick McGeehan and Lee Van Cleef...

Canada getting deep into fantasy horror quickies, ripping off *Coma* with Paul Lynch's *Don't See The Doctor* and Philip Hersch's *Patman*—about a hospital orderly going berserk. Craft, it makes a change from the patients...

Roger Corman enters the tele-movie game with *Georgia Peaches*, horror it ain't, fantasy may be—about three girls running a moonshining business...

The Incredible Hulk has given birth—to a possible spin-off series called *The Disciple*...

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BOOK WORLD



CLIFFHANGER by Alan G. Barbour

Many of us are not old enough to remember the 12 and 15 chapter serials made by such film studios as Republic and Universal during the peak years from 1930-1950. In fact, a surprising number of people don't even know of their existence. Surprising because I distinctly remember seeing the *Batman* serial (Columbia, 1943) and *The Mysterious Dr Satan* (Republic, 1940), which starred that masked nemesis of evil-doers Copperhead, as little as fifteen years ago at my local Saturday morning kiddie matinees.

But the serials did not restrict themselves to the costumed crenks and super-deads of such off-beat offerings as *Dick Purcell in Captain America* (Republic, 1944) and *Kirk Alyn in Superman* (Columbia, 1948) and *Blackhawk* (Columbia, 1952). Serial fodder ranged from Robert Shaw swash-buckling his way through the terminally mediocre *Son of the Guerdman* (Columbia, 1946), a kind of pale Robin Hood imitation, to heart-throb Linde Stirling in *The Tiger Woman* (Republic, 1944). There were westerns (a couple even starred John Wayne) and detectives, there were jungle epics and air stories. Why, there was even science fiction serials!

Science fiction in the serials was heavily in evidence from as far back as 1934 and *The Vanishing Shadow* from Universal and continued to pop up until the last of the sf serials, *Captain Video in The Lost Planet* (Columbia, 1953). Between the two extremes serial fans were treated to high spots like the legendary Lerry "Buster" Crebbe in the superb *Flesh Gordon* (Universal, 1936) and the same actor in its dreary imitation *Buck Rogers* (Universal, 1939). And long before *Star Trek* was even a twinkle in Gene Roddenberry's eye, Leonard Nimoy was

appearing in such science fiction horse-laughs as *Zombies of the Stratosphere* (Republic, 1952), a phase of his career we're sure Mr Nimoy would sooner forget—but we're not going to let him!

As far as I can ascertain, 231 sound serials were made by the various studios from their inception in 1929 to the last in 1956. The serials, despite their "poverty row" status in cine circles, boasted such big-name stars as John Wayne, Lon Cheney Jr, Bela Lugosi... and Rin-Tin-Tin!

Alan G. Barbour's book *Cliffhanger*, chronicles the twenty-seven-year history of the film serials in a style that will please not only the most fervent serial addicts but also the mildly curious observer. Though the author clearly remembers at least some of the offerings covered from first-hand experience he refrains from wallowing in a mire of self-indulgent nostalgia.

The book contains almost 400 stills, posters and behind-the-scenes photos captioned in a style which is both witty and informative. However the text borders onto the superfluous. Each chapter contains a mere two pages of text and 10-12 pages of illustrations, a fact which places *Cliffhanger* safely under the classification of "picture book".

Published by BCW Publishers Inc
260 pages. £8.95.



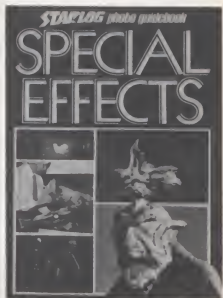
CLOSE ENCOUNTERS PORTFOLIO

Ariel Books have a well-deserved reputation for quality and they have maintained their high standard with this portfolio. It consists of 18 full colour plates from *Close Encounters* and the reproduction is superb. Of the photographs included the four of the Mothership are incredible and are the best shots of the craft that I have seen to date. All but four of the remaining plates are made up of between two and five scenes from different aspects of the movie and, again, they are excellently reproduced.

Published by Ariel Books/Ballantine Books.
12 1/2 x 11 1/2". 18 plates. \$7.95. Import.

SPECIAL EFFECTS VOLUME 1

This is the latest in Starlog's series of *Photoguide* books and is the most interesting to date. As the title implies, this book is



profusely illustrated—it's 100 pages contain over 130 photographs—many of them in full colour.

Special Effects is not intended to be a definitive handbook on how to create your own miniatures and cinematic illusions although many useful tips are given throughout. The book sets out to give insight into the myriad aspects of this specialist craft and succeeds extremely well. It is particularly interesting that many of the stills and photographs used are rarer "behind the camera" shots.

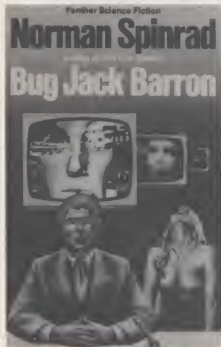
Anyone expecting a book practically devoted to Messrs Dykstra, Trumbull and Herrhausen will be disappointed. Although space is obviously given to the "neme" special effects creators as much, if not more, is given over to the newcomers and unsung back-room boys who lay much of the groundwork for the visual success of films such as *Star Wars* and *Close Encounters*.

As this is Volume 1 in a series it is primarily devoted to the creation of miniatures and, where applicable, their animation. It is an absorbing book and it pleased me to note that the two photographs which stood out most were of British creations—perhaps more interestingly they were both from Gerry Anderson shows; one from *Captain Scarlet* and the *Mysterons* and the other from *Doppelgänger* (Journey to the far side of the Sun). Both created by Derek Maddings. In these days of the glory of the big-name American special effects directors, we should not forget we have our own home-grown geniuses.

Starlog are obviously finding their Photo-guide books to be a success and the next two—**Science Fiction Weapons Volume 1** and **Robots**—are due for publication in the very near future. **AC**
Published by D'Quin Studios Inc. 10 1/2 x 8 1/2". 100 pages. £6.95. Import.

BUG JACK BARRON by Norman Spinrad
It is 1994 and Jack Barron has one of the biggest audience-appeal shows on television, the basic concept of which is that if someone's bugging you then contact the show and "bug Jack Barron" who will then annoy whoever is annoying you.

What starts off as an ordinary cell to the show sets up a chain of events that could



put Barron either on top of the world or at the bottom of the river.

Within this framework Norman Spinrad has woven a story of which part is "if you have made your name and reputation through honesty, can you still be honest when the stakes are very high?" Very easily Norman Spinrad could have driven his message home with a cudgel and Bug Jack Barron could have been one of those intellectual books that "bug" me. He didn't, and the book is that much better for it.

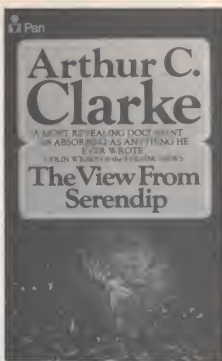
We are lucky enough to be going through a period when many fine sf books are again becoming readily available—BJB is one of them. **AC**

Published by Panther. 288 pages. 95p.

THE VIEW FROM SERENDIP by Arthur C. Clarke

If you enjoy the fictional work of Arthur C. Clarke then you might find it interesting to read this book while waiting for his next novel.

Serendip is a book of two parts: it is some of the fragments of Mr Clarke's life in Sri Lanka coupled with his opinions and thoughts on the future direction of science. If you like



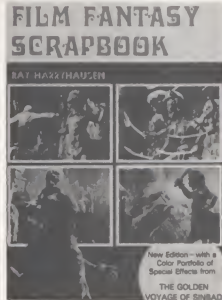
gaining an insight into what makes a science fiction author tick or find interest in speculative fact, then **The View From Serendip** would be of value to you. But if you are in search of entertainment you might find it a little bit heavy going. **AC**

Published by Pan Books. 140 pages. 95p.

FILM FANTASY SCRAPBOOK by Ray Harryhausen

This seems to be the month for re-issues as this autobiographical account of Ray Harryhausen's career appears in the bookshops once more.

Anybody who is interested in Ray Harry-



hausen and/or animation will find **Film Fantasy Scrapbook** worthwhile.

If the book has one failing it is that the author has not provided enough editorial

material on his work, being content, in the main, to let the pictures tell their story. When last this book appeared it was up-dated to include a 22 page section (including six pages of colour stills) on **The Golden Voyage of Sinbad**. This section has been retained but, regrettably, the book has not been further revised. At £9.50 it is probably out of the reach of many Ray Harryhausen fans, but, for the first time ever, a paperback edition is being printed and this will be available in the very near future. I understand that the price will be around £4.50 but this cannot be confirmed at press time. **AC**
Published by Barnes Tantivy. 12 1/2 x 9 1/2". 144 pages. £9.50.

EXILES ON ASPERUS by John Wyndham
The three stories in this collection have an "old-fashioned" flavour that is sadly missing in some of today's science fiction work: this is not surprising when you consider that the earliest of the trio was first published in 1923 and the latest in 1951.

It makes a more than pleasant change to be able to pick up a book knowing that you won't have to struggle with the higher intellectual philosophies of the author as propounded by his main character. This



doesn't mean that John Wyndham's stories can be dismissed as "space opera"—while they are adventure stories there is more to them than that: however as an author John Wyndham did not find it necessary to use that same heavy cudgel to get his message across. **AC**

Published by Coronet Books. 160 pages. 75p.

Reviews
by Alex Carpenter
and
Alan Murdoch

RECORD WORLD

THROUGH A GLASS DARKLY

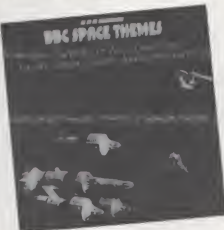
The evolution of the science fiction record has produced two instantly definable categories thus far. The film theme class, which has gained momentum since the fine score for Kubrick's 2001, and more recently the spoken word albums which have introduced many of the genre's classic works. How, then, do you judge a disc that does not exactly fall between the two accepted divisions and yet is neither one nor the other?

Peter Howell and the BBC Radiophonic Workshop have produced here a competent instrumental package integrated with some interesting sound effects that give the record its own unique flavour. But because it takes on an experimental aspect and is aimed at no-one in particular the quality guaranteed by the "best of BBC tv and radio" designation is not enough to recommend it. Of course, a limited-appeal recording may have the potential to challenge the sub-genre monopolists if it is completely satisfying, but in this particular case the spark of life—that minuscule creative germ that encourages the potentially popular but demns the mundane—is not epprent.

This is not to suggest, however, that the record is a complete failure. A few spins will make all the tracks more familiar and, obviously, one bright feature of the disc is its total originality. That may be a plus or a minus, depending on your point of view, but the diversity of sounds and the variety of instruments certainly take it above the level of the boring. So, if you want something a little different with which to whet your musical palate this might be a reasonable

BBC SPACE THEMES

If you buy only one record per year—sf orientated or otherwise—make it this one. A perfect mixture of popular and obscure, contemporary and classical music this album takes BBC science fact and science fiction theme tunes as its basic premise and pro-



vides a diversity of arrangements that is both entertaining and surprising. The surprises are all pleasant, headed by *The Sky at Night* theme from Patrick Moore's evergreen astronomy programme which, in all probability, very few people have heard in its entirety. This turns out to be an inconspicuous work by Sibelius entitled *At the Castle Gate* but nobody at the BBC has dared to change it.

Old time radio buffs are catered for with the music from *Journey Into Space*, the one piece of real nostalgia because the *Quatermass* theme is revealed as the better known *Mars* opus from the *Planets Suite* by Holst. Less recognisable is the *A for Andromeda* score, another of the older programmes represented here, but if you were born more recently there are plenty of currently popular titles to pick from including the haunting *Dr Who* theme, coming right up to date with *Bleke's Seven* and *Terror's World*.

The only disappointment in this glittering array is the arrangement of the *Ster Trek* title music, a jazzed-up version that presents a peple comparison with the original. Likewise, the *Fantare for the Common Man* piece that prefaced the Apollo-Soyuz commentaries fades into insignificance when compared with the original, although it still comes over with verva and precision.

The rest of the album trains off with unfamiliar music from *Moonbase 3* and *The Case of the Ancient Astronauts*, the latter comprising the talents of the BBC Radiophonic Workshop, omni-present on all the BBC records it seems. This is an excellent recording and I recommend it unreservedly. **BBC Record. Cat: REH 324. Rec retail price £3.99.**

DOCTOR WHO SOUND EFFECTS

The BBC Radiophonic Workshop strike again on this recording, chock full of eural offerings from a wide spectrum of the good Doctor's adventures. But apart from providing an invaluable service to *Dr Who* devotees and completists, the *raison d'être* for this disc is a little obscure. Consisting entirely of ponderous and often repetitive noises, it seems incredible to imagine that anyone could draw up a choir and actually sit down and listen to a fission gun (2 blasts) closely followed by a dose of Gallifreyan Staser Gun (3 blasts) and a shot of Dragon-Rey Gun (mercifully only 1 blast).

Now it is possible that the recording was made with something else in mind other than



a pleasant forty minutes around the fireside. If so... what? Whilst there is no doubt that the enormous range of radiophonics are extremely clever, the presentation of these leaves a lot to be desired. For example, the aforementioned gun blasts are all congregated at the end of the record—and there are nine of them—whereas interspersed at intervals throughout the recording they may have been a little less tedious.

Additionally, the album appears lop-sided with eight tracks on the first side and twenty-two on the second which tends to highlight the suspect presentation. Also the recording is in mono because all the effects were made especially for television use and this tends to detract from the enjoyment of the more pleasing sound effects.

I'm afraid this one is strictly for the enthusiast and that is the only plausible market for such a venture.

BBC Records. Cat: REC 316. Rec retail price £3.99.

Reviews
by Ken Howes



place to start. But if, like me, your attitudes are conditioned by the acceptability of the familiar then you may be a trifle disappointed with this offering.

BBC Records. Cat: REC 307. Rec retail price £3.99.

Maya Merchandising

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THE SHAPE OF THINGS TO COME

Review by Bobby Dupea

Once in a while you come across a film, deeply entrenched in the wonderment and awe of the ever burgeoning world of science fiction and fantasy, that you rush along to, take your seat at, look up at the screen with expectation, and as the curtains open and the film begins, you know deep down in the recesses of your heart... it's a stinker!

Little more really needs to be said or written of where *The Shape of Things To Come* is concerned. Much is made, within the pages of publicity that the son of H. G. Wells, one Frank Wells, "was the consultant in the scientific aspects of the production." He didn't do much overtime. And indeed, his time may have been far better spent on the fictional aspects of the production, protecting the name and fame of his late father, who must be spinning in whatever galactic tomb he finished up in.

You don't have to be aged - not even a film buff - to know this book has been filmed already. You may not have seen it, or not all of it, but you've almost certainly seen some of it - a snatch or two in some television programme looking at the world of science fiction films. In all you may have seen a minute, maybe two or three, certainly with the high prices film companies charge for clips on tv nowadays, no more than five.

Even thirty seconds of the original film



Above: Jason (Nicholas Campbell), Sparks, John Caball (Barry Morse) and Kim (Eddie Benton). Below: Niki (Carol Lynley) is surprised by one of Omus' robots. Opposite top: *The Spaceship Starstreak*. Opposite below: Our heroes are cornered by the evil robots.

would be better than seeing all of this one.

The story of *Shape of Things to Come* picks up fifty years after where the 1936 version left off. The action centres around the moon colony of New Washington which is protected from the harsh lunar conditions under a blue translucent dome.

In the control centre of the busy lunar

colony he helped build is Dr John Caball (Barry Morse). Assisted by his grandson, Jason, (Nicholas Campbell) he monitors the return to the Moon of a freighter, bearing with it a precious cargo of Radic, a mineral which is farmed only on the planet Delta Three.

But the freighter has been sabotaged by the villain of the piece Omus (Jack Palance) and nothing (short of a script re-write) can prevent it crashing straight into the heart of the lunar colony itself.

Omus, renegade robot master and self-styled emperor of Delta Three, sends a warning to Caball: New Washington must surrender itself and the Earth to Omus or be destroyed.

The inhabitants of New Washington are ill-prepared to defend themselves - war and its weapons having been left behind on Earth.

There is, however, one chance (there always is!) - the spaceship *Starstreak*, built basically for defensive purposes.

Under the command of Dr Caball, together with Jason, *Starstreak* takes off on an unauthorised and desperate flight to Delta Three. The mission - to defeat Omus - and to obtain the necessary supplies of Radic.

Also aboard *Starstreak* are Kim (Eddie





Benton), one of Jason's closest friends and "Sparks", a friendly robot which Kim has reconstructed from the debris of the crashed freighter.

The *Starstreak* is forced to land on Earth because of a malfunction. The Earth is now devastated by pollution and nuclear warfare, and inhabited by assorted groups of wandering tribesmen and groups of children who unsuccessfully try to kidnap Kim. Caball and the others repair the *Starstreak* and when they leave for Delta Three they promise the children to return with supplies

of the desperately needed Radic.

The second in a long line of mishaps occurs when the *Starstreak* runs into a meteor storm and Jason and Kim have to make further repairs to the damaged vessel.

Eventually, the ship lands on the desolate surface of Delta Three. The survivors of the original colonists of the planet are led by a woman, Niki (Carol Lynley). She and her followers have taken refuge in a series of volcanic caves where she hides her lunar visitors. But Dr Caball heroically sets off to spy out the headquarters of Omus, and

is taken prisoner by Palance and his metallic chums.

Kim and Niki try to effect Caball's rescue and the film reaches an unexciting climax with a pitched battle. Unfortunately, the rescue attempt is unsuccessful and Caball is killed by the bad guys.

Of course, Omus is eventually defeated and, together with his secret fortress, The Citadel, is blown into eternity and the audience breathes a sigh of relief.

Where this movie has gone wrong would take a full page or two – merely in listing the failings. Suffice is to say that apparently what little money was invested in the enterprise – which began as a film, then was announced as a Canadian tv series, and now seems to have reverted to film form of – was invested in the wrong areas. Or indeed, in the wrong people.

If the script was lousy but the effects were terrific, one could not complain too loudly. If the script was superb and the effects were cheap and shoddy, again one would hold the peace. Either way, some effort could have been seen to have been made.

As it is, what we have here is a failure to communicate any of H.G. Wells' brilliance. A script that is not so much juvenile as infantile, and effects that would be laughed off the screen if the Andersons had dared put them into *Space 1999*. Even *Dr Who* and *Blake's Seven* have better effects than seen here.

Since George Lucas awakened the film-





going world to science fantasy again, and unfortunately galvanised long since dormant film producers into cashing in on his inventiveness, we, at **Starburst**, have become used to seeing a lot of dross dragged up in ill-fitting sf clothing. We have scoffed at the Italians and the Japanese. We will no more. They try. George McCowan's version of H. G. Wells

is simply *trying*. Very trying indeed.

Barry Morse, who takes up the mantle of Raymond Massey from the original, should know better. Jack Palance and Carol Lynley are flown in at moderate expense from Hollywood to add a little lustre to the billing, and compete with each other in acting so far over-the-top the rest of the amateurish cast would need rockets to

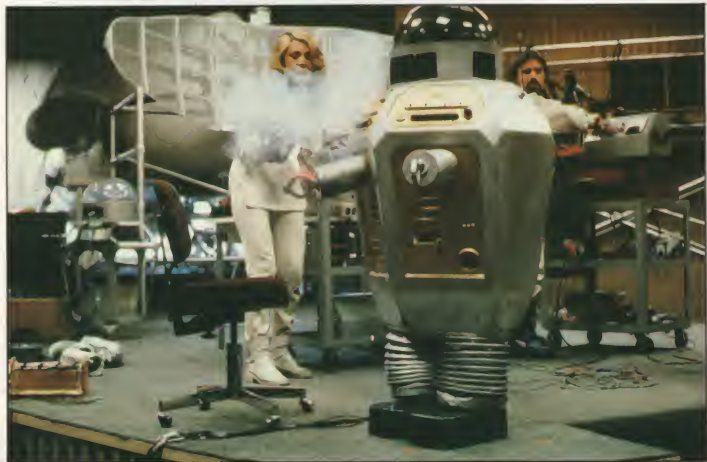
catch up with them.

And yet, we suppose, that sometime, somewhere, everybody felt it was a great idea. To tackle Wells again, pop in some robots – good and evil – rip-off Lucas as much as possible but to better effect because this was Wells after all, this was John Caball and not Luke Skywalker. This was literature, this was a classic.

The operative word is "was". This was literature, this was a classic. But it sure isn't any more! This is a sad, sorry, utterly unforgiveable farce.

The whole thing looks as if it were made by the tea-ladies when cast and crew were out to lunch. The costumes are diabolical; Jack Palance's doesn't even fit. The rocketry seems to have been manufactured from cereal packets. The allegedly monstrous robots look exactly what they are – men lumbering around in a form of metallic (well, plastic-metallic) beer barrels. The dialogue is atrocious. "What the hell was that all about?" "I think you owe me some kind of explanation." type of clichés. And best/worst of all, when our adolescent hero (who looks like David Bowie the day he read his **Just A Gigolo** reviews) has to leave behind on earth, a score of nuclear-polluted children, sick, dying, covered in badly made-up sores and wearing a chorus-line's cast-off blonde wigs, and says: "Listen, kids, I know you've had a tough time but . . ."

I think that's when I left. Or fell asleep. Or simply began my own fantasy whirling





inside my head, about how this entire endeavour was written, produced, directed, designed, special-effected and made-up by the movie's absurd looking robots.

Give me films by Italian androids anytime.

They at least try for style. The Canadians involved in this venture have about as much

style as a dishrag. They don't look forward the way Wells did, they look back. And so, for Luke Skywalker read Jason Caball, for Princess Leia read Kim Smedley, for Ben Kenobi I suppose we must read John Caball, for Darth Vader read Palance's Omus, for R2D2 read Sparks, but for the film simply read the book - and stay home.



The Shape of Things to Come (1978)

Jack Palance (as Omus), Carol Lynley (Niki), Barry Morse (Dr John Caball), John Ireland (Senator Smedley), Nicholas Campbell (Jason Caball), Eddie Benton (Kim Smedley), Mark Parr (Sparks; voice by Greg Swanson), William Hutt (voice of master computer, Lonax), Ardon Bess (Merrick), Lynn Green (lunar technician), Albert Humphries (robot technician), Bill Lake (astronaut), Mike Klingbell, Jonathan Hartman, Will Lieberman, Bob McEwan (robots), Jo-Anne Lang, Danny Gage, Linda Carter, Terry Martin, Lutz Brodie, Bill Yak, Terry Spratt (Niki's soldiers). Executive Producer Harry Alan Towers, Produced by William Davison, Directed by George McCowan, Script by Martin Lager, Script Concept Development by Michael Cheda and Joseph Glazner, based on the novel by H. G. Wells, Scientific Consultant Frank Wells, Photography by Reginald Morris, Special Effects directed by Wally Gentleman, Art Director, Gerry Holmes, Costumes by Larry Wells, Make-Up by Bill Morgan, Edited by Stan Cole, Michael O'Farrell and Bruce Lange, Sound Editors Patrick Drummond, Dennis Drummond, Fred Brennen and Lydia Wazana, Sets by Maïdo Sims, Robots by Ralph Tillack, Music direction and orchestration by Paul Hoffert and Lawrence Shragge.

A SOTTIC Film Production in association with C.F.I. Investments, Inc. (Canada), Released by Barber Dann Films.
Cert: A A U X

Beyond the earth... Beyond the moon...
Beyond your wildest dreams!

H.G.WELLS' THE SHAPE OF THINGS TO COME



H.G.WELLS' "THE SHAPE OF THINGS TO COME"

Starring JACK PALANCE · CAROL LYNLEY · BARRY MORSE and JOHN IRELAND
with NICHOLAS CAMPBELL as Jason and EDDIE BENTON as Kim
Executive Producer Harry Alan Towers · Produced by William Davidson

Directed by George McGowan · ACFI Investments presentation

Full movie review ~ see page 44